



FSIS Constituent Update

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Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety

National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods to Hold Public Meeting

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold public meetings July 12 - 15, 2005. The full committee and subcommittees will meet on Tuesday, July 12, from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday and Thursday, July 13 and 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Friday, July 15, from 8:30 a.m. to noon. All meetings will be held at the Washington Plaza Hotel, 10 Thomas Circle NW, Washington, D.C.

Agenda items include:

- Analytical Utility of *Campylobacter* Methodologies;
- Determination of Cooking Parameters for Safe Seafood for Consumers;
and
- Consumer Guidelines for the Safe Cooking of Poultry Products.

Further information on agenda items will be available at:

www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations/2005_Notices_Index/.

The NACMCF was established in 1988 to provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services on public health issues relative to the safety and wholesomeness of the U.S. food supply. These issues include the development of microbiological criteria, the review and evaluation of epidemiological and risk assessment data, and methodologies for assessing microbiological hazards in foods.

Persons requiring further meeting information, a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should contact Karen Thomas no later than July 8, 2005, by phone at (202) 690-6620 or by e-mail at Karen.Thomas@fsis.usda.gov.

Export Requirement Updates

The Library of Export Requirements has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following countries:

Belize

Indonesia

Philippines

Russia

St. Lucia

Complete information is available online at:

[www.fsis.usda.gov/
Regulations_&_Policies/
Export_Information/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/)



Food Safety Tips During an Emergency Available Online

USDA is providing recommendations in advance of Hurricane Dennis, which is expected to impact Gulf Coast States as early as this weekend. USDA is hopeful that this information will help minimize the potential for foodborne illnesses due to power outages or flooding as a result of the adverse weather conditions. To learn steps to follow before and after an emergency visit the FSIS Web site at: www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_070705_01/

FSIS Guidance Material on the Relative Humidity for Ready-To-Eat Products

In response to questions regarding the applicability of relative humidity for ready-to-eat products, FSIS prepared guidance material related to Appendix A, "Compliance Guidelines for Meeting Lethality Performance Standards for Certain Meat and Poultry Products." The guidance material, "Appendix A Guidance on Relative Humidity and Time/Temperature for Cooking/Heating and Applicability to Production of Other Ready-to-Eat Meat and Poultry Products," clarifies the circumstances in which Appendix A is relevant. This guidance material can be found at: www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Compliance_Guides_Index/index.asp#95-033F

Extension of Effective Date for BSE Notice

FSIS is extending the expiration date for FSIS Notice 33-04, Compliance and Investigations Division (CID) Protocol for Off-Site Collection of Brain Samples for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Testing until July 1, 2006.

This notice was due to expire July 1, 2005. However, the notice and instructions provided in it will remain in effect until FSIS takes final action on the interim final rule, "Prohibition of the Use of Specified Risk Materials for Human Food and Requirements for the Disposition of Non-Ambulatory Disable Cattle." FSIS will then reissue information from this notice in an FSIS Directive.

THIS WEEK'S HOT WEB LINKS

Information for Scientists and Researchers

[www.fsis.usda.gov/
Scientists_&_Researchers/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Scientists_&_Researchers/)

FSIS Careers

www.fsis.usda.gov/Careers/



FSIS Provides Guidance Material on Poultry Inspection Requirements

FSIS created guidance for determining whether a poultry slaughter or processing operation is exempt from inspection requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) to help small businesses and poultry producers who slaughter or process poultry for human food determine whether their slaughter or processing operations are eligible for exemption from federal or state inspection.

The FSIS guidance material presents each of the seven types of slaughter and processing operations that the PPIA exempts from continuous Federal or State inspection. The discussion on each exemption includes a list of criteria that the business must meet to be eligible to slaughter and process poultry products without continuous FSIS or State inspection.

This guide will be helpful to producers or businesses in determining whether their slaughter or processing operations require USDA or State inspection, as mandated in the PPIA. This guidance does not address exemptions related to livestock products (e.g., meat from cattle, swine, sheep, and equine) because the Federal Meat Inspection Act does not provide exemptions similar to those contained in the PPIA.

The compliance guide is currently available on the FSIS Web site from the following locations:

www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Compliance_Guides_Index/
www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/compliance_assistance/

FSIS Launches New Search Engine

On July 1, 2005, FSIS launched a new search engine (Google) on its Web site to help Web site users find information more efficiently and effectively. From anywhere on the site, the drop-down menu under the search box can be used to search the FSIS Web site, one of five sub-collections, or the USDA Web site. An improved Advanced Search page also serves as a virtual reference center, offering additional options for more precise inquiries. The Advanced Search and Search Tips can be found at: www.fsis.usda.gov/Search/Advanced_Search_&_Search_Tips/



The USDA Food Safety Mobile: Taking Food Safety Education on the Road

The USDA Food Safety Mobile travels continuously throughout the United States to educate consumers about the risks associated with mishandling food and steps they can take to reduce their risk of foodborne illness. The food safety mobile's next dates and locations are as follows:

July 8-10, 2005
Sailfest 2005
(New London, Conn.)

July 14
Whole Foods Market
(Hingham, Mass.)

July 16
United States Military
Academy
(West Point, N.Y.)

Verification of Establishment Controls for Ingredients that are Public Health Concerns

FSIS Notice 45-05 provides inspection program personnel with instructions for verifying that establishments have the appropriate process controls in place for ingredients that are public health concerns because they can trigger food sensitivities (such as food allergies and intolerances). This will help reduce the number of recalls associated with adulterated and misbranded meat and poultry products because of the undeclared presence of ingredients that are capable of causing adverse reactions.

Eight categories of foods are most often associated with food allergies. They are wheat, Crustacea (e.g., shrimp, crab, lobster), eggs, fish, peanuts, milk, tree nuts (e.g., almonds, pecans, walnuts), and soybeans.

Other potential causes of adverse reactions in sensitive individuals are ingredients, such as monosodium glutamate (MSG), sulfites, lactose, and Yellow 5 (tartrazine). The adverse reactions to these substances are due to the ingredient itself or its chemical composition.

To read this notice in its entirety visit:

www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/FSIS_notices_index/

Dual Jurisdiction Establishments

FSIS Directive 5730.1 provides instruction to FSIS inspection program personnel about their roles and responsibilities with regard to inspection, verification, documentation of findings and enforcement actions in establishments that operate under the jurisdiction of both FSIS and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). These dual jurisdiction establishments produce and ship products regulated by FDA as well as products regulated by FSIS. To read this entire directive visit: www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/regulations_directives_&_notices/

**To submit comments or questions, contact the editor,
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(202) 720-9113**



Office of the Week:

Office of Food Defense and Emergency Response

The Office of Food Defense & Emergency Response (OFDER) manages all homeland security activities within FSIS. OFDER makes sure that policy makers, scientists, field staff and management are prepared to prevent and respond to any food security threat.

OFDER directs FSIS' food security public education and awareness activities. OFDER helps the public learn how to protect their family in the event of either a natural disaster or an intentional attack. To learn more about OFDER visit: www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/OFDER/