



FSIS Constituent Update

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Protecting the Public Health by Significantly Reducing Foodborne Hazards from Meat, Poultry and Egg Products

NACMCF Subcommittees to Meet

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods Subcommittee on Scientific Criteria for Redefining Pasteurization will hold public meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 27 & 28, 2004 and on Thursday, April 29, 2004, in addition The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) Subcommittee on Criteria for Refrigerated Shelf-life Based on Safety will also hold public meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, May 11-13, 2004, , and on Friday, May 14, 2004, both subcommittees will meet at the Aerospace Building, 901 "D" St., SW, Room 369, Washington, DC.

If you would like to attend any of these meetings or for more information on times, please contact Karen Thomas, Advisory Committee Specialist, at 202-690-6620. Please note due to increased security measures at the Aerospace Building, all persons wishing to attend must RSVP in advance.

Reminder: Deadline for BSE Comments Approaching

In January, FSIS issued four new rules to further enhance safeguards against Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). These policies include: requiring additional process controls for establishments using advanced meat recovery (AMR) systems; holding meat from cattle that have been tested for BSE until the test results are received and they are negative; and prohibiting the air-injection stunning of cattle. FSIS will continue accepting comments on the new BSE regulations until April 12, 2004. Any comments should be directed to: FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #03-0381F, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. Complete information on the new regulations can be found at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/news/2004/bseregs.htm>.

Export Requirement Updates

The [Library of Export Requirements](#) has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following countries:

- Chile**
- Philippines**
- Suriname**
- European Union**
- Singapore**
- Mexico**
- Romania**

Complete information can be found at:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>



FSIS Recalls

Idaho Firm Recalls Beef Chili Because Of Undeclared Allergens (March 31, 2004)

Seneca Foods Corporation, a Payette, Idaho, firm is voluntarily recalling approximately 7,250 pounds of beef chili because of undeclared allergens (wheat and soy). The chili was produced on Nov. 4, 2003 and shipped to restaurants and wholesale distributors in California, Oregon and Washington. FSIS has received no reports of allergic reactions associated with consumption of this product.

Mississippi Firm Recalls Roast Beef Because Of Undeclared Allergens (March 19, 2004)

Plumrose USA, Inc., a Booneville, Miss., voluntarily recalled approximately 94,800 pounds of roast beef because of undeclared allergens (wheat and soy protein). The products were produced between October 1, 2003 and March 12, 2004. They were distributed to retail stores in California and Oregon. No illnesses related to products distributed in the U.S. have been reported.

How to Make a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) allows access to almost all Federal agency records. FSIS, like other Federal agencies, is required to provide requestors with copies of certain records. However, many Agency documents are available to the public without having to file a FOIA request. These include press releases, speeches, consumer and technical publications, statistics, congressional testimony, and some letters and memoranda.

To make a FOIA request, you should write a letter to FSIS ([see sample letter](#)). Mark the letter and the envelope, or the fax cover sheet, with "FOIA Request." Provide your phone number, mailing address, or fax number so we can contact you if we need more information. Identify the records that you want as specifically as possible to help us locate them. Any facts or details you can give about the time, place, authors, events, and subjects will be helpful in our search and in determining which records will respond to your request. You do not have to state the reasons for your request. Identify what agency, organization, or individuals you represent because this can make a difference in what fees, if any, you may be charged for the documents requested. For more information on FOIA requests please visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/FOIA/handbook.htm>

THIS WEEK'S HOT WEB LINKS

Food Safety Education and Consumer Information

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/consedu.htm>

Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/FAQ/faq.htm>

Food Security and Emergency Preparedness

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/topics/biosecurity.htm>



FSIS Seeks Additional Comment on Sanitation Procedures

FSIS is seeking additional information related to its Jan. 12, *Federal Register* notice announcing a series of interim final rules to further protect the meat supply against Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). After the diagnosis of a positive case of BSE on Dec. 23, 2003, USDA announced the prohibition of the use of specified risk materials for human food. SRMs are tissues designated as being of higher risk for containing the infective agent that causes BSE. FSIS is seeking public comment on methods used to prevent cross-contamination of carcasses with SRMs in order to further strengthen the measures it currently requires of establishments. The deadline for receiving comments is April 12, 2004, the original comment deadline for the interim final rules. Comments should be directed to: FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #03-025IF, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th and C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

Codex Public Meeting

The Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products will hold a public meeting on Tuesday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., in Room 3501, South Agriculture Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC, 20250. Agenda items for the meeting can be found at <http://www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp>

Featured Office of the Week

Labeling and Consumer Protection

The Labeling and Consumer Protection Staff (LCPS) develops policies and inspection methods and administers programs to protect consumers from misbranded and economically adulterated meat, poultry, and egg products. The purpose of the Staff's activities is to ensure that all labels are truthful and not misleading. Labeling includes all forms of product identification, claims, net weight, species identification and nutrition related to meat, poultry and egg products. The staff serves as the Agency expert group on the composition of meat, poultry, and egg products, including safe and suitable ingredients. For more information on Labeling and Consumer Protection please visit: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/larc/index.htm>.

To Contact the Constituent Update Editor

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

The USDA Food Safety Mobile is a 35-foot, recreational-style vehicle covered with a bold, eye-catching design and prominent food safety messages, including the four Fight BAC!® messages of the Partnership for Food Safety Education.

The next stops for the Food Safety Mobile are:

April 3
Kidfest,
Beaufort, SC

April 4
Columbia Plant and Flower Show,
Columbia, SC

April 5
Elementary school,
Columbia, SC