



FSIS Constituent Update

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

FSIS Report to the Secretary on Food Security Initiatives

“Protecting America’s Meat, Poultry and Egg Products: A Report to the Secretary on the Food Security Initiatives of the Food Safety and Inspection Service,” was introduced on April 22. The report details the activities the agency has undertaken since enactment of Public Law 107-188, which allows FSIS to use existing authorities to keep the U.S. food supply safe from intentional contamination. The previous report, released January 2003, detailed the efforts that the Agency took immediately after the attacks of September 11, 2001. The improvements in emergency preparedness and response and increased levels of scientific expertise in biological, chemical, and radiological terrorism were highlighted by Dr. Elsa A. Murano, USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety, at the opening of a new Biosecurity Level 3 (BSL-3) facility in Athens, Ga. Copies of the report will be available on the FSIS Web site soon.

USDA Launches Consumer-Friendly Food Safety Web Site

FSIS has launched a redesigned website to give its constituents easier and faster access to information about food safety. In just a few clicks, constituents can find the information they need. Visitors can also talk to “Karen,” a virtual food safety hotline representative. She will instantly respond to questions about safely storing, preparing and handling meat, poultry and egg products. Of course, consumers still can call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline, 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) with questions as well.

The FSIS site redesign follows Secretary Ann M. Veneman’s announcement in January of an aggressive program to enhance the Department’s electronic capabilities—part of President Bush’s Management agenda.

Export Requirement Updates

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

Canada
Cuba
Hong Kong
China

Complete information can be found at:

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



FSIS Extends Registration Deadline

FSIS announced this week that the deadline for all applicable businesses to register with the agency has been extended to May 24, 2004.

Unless a business operates under Federal inspection, it is required by law to register with the U.S.D.A if it deals in meat or poultry products in, or for, commerce. Since 1970, FSIS has required businesses affected by the Poultry Products Inspection Act and the Federal Meat Inspection Act to maintain business records and to make such records available to FSIS employees upon request. Registration information and business records are critical in any FSIS investigation related to public health, food safety or misbranding of meat or poultry products. This information is particularly vital in tracing the source of pathogens and in preventing the spread of foodborne illnesses.

The new registration form asks registrants to provide certain information that was not previously requested, including an e-mail address, phone number and subsidiaries' hours of operation. All businesses, including those that are currently registered, must complete the new form and submit it to FSIS. The new registration form is currently available and can be accessed at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/2004_Notices_Index/index.asp. The form will also be available from FSIS personnel who visit businesses required to register.

Reminder: NACMCF Subcommittees to Meet

The Subcommittee on Scientific Criteria for Redefining Pasteurization of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold public meetings April 27-29 and May 11, 2004. In addition, the NACMCF Subcommittee on Criteria for Refrigerated Shelf-life Based on Safety will hold public meetings May 11-14, 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 need more information, please contact Karen Thomas, Advisory Committee Specialist, at 202-690-6620. Due to increased security measures at the Aerospace Building, all persons wishing to attend must RSVP in advance.

THIS WEEK'S HOT WEB LINKS

FSIS Laboratories and Procedures

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Laboratories_&_Procedures/index.asp

Office of Program, Evaluation, Enforcement and Review

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSI/OPEER/index.asp

Food Safety Mobile Game for Kids

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/For_Kids_&_Teens/index.asp



New FSIS Food Safety Publication for Physicians and Healthcare Officials Available

FSIS, American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, Food and Drug Administration, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have developed an updated edition of *Diagnosis and Management of Foodborne Illnesses: A Primer for Physicians and Other Health Care Professionals*. In 2001, FSIS co-sponsored the development of the first edition of the primer. The second edition includes patient hand-outs and sections on five new topics: salmonella, toxoplasma, listeria, Hepatitis A, norovirus, and unexplained illnesses. This educational resource provides doctors and other health care professionals with information to help them identify and treat cases of foodborne illness. Health care professionals can receive free copies of the primer by requesting them from the AMA. Many of the primer resources are also available on the AMA web site at www.ama-assn.org/go/foodborne.

FSIS Food Safety Message on Tax Refund Envelopes

A foodborne illness warning from FSIS is appearing this month in an unexpected—but highly visible—place. It's printed on the backs of envelopes in which the Internal Revenue Service will mail tax refunds to an estimated 15 million Americans in April. The message encourages consumers to call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline for advice on preventing foodborne illness.

Stop Foodborne Illness Now!

(Food Poisoning)

Our food safety experts can tell you how...

1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline
(TTY) is 1-800-256-7072

Find out how to safely handle, prepare, and store meat, poultry, and egg products in your home.
Available in English or Spanish.

www.fsis.usda.gov

United States Department of Agriculture • Food Safety and Inspection Service
Please do not call your Treasury Regional Finance Center for information on this offer.



To Contact the Constituent Update Editor

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Featured Office of the Week



Import Inspection Division

FSIS plans and administers a national import reinspection program. After the [U.S. Customs Service](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/about_fsis/OIA/index.asp) and [USDA-APHIS](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/about_fsis/OIA/index.asp) requirements are met, shipments imported into the U.S. must be reinspected by FSIS at an approved import inspection facility. FSIS inspectors carry out reinspection in approximately 125 official import establishments. To learn more about IPS please visit:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/about_fsis/OIA/index.asp