



FSIS Constituent Update

Volume 5, Issue 29

August 6, 2004

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety

USDA and Michigan State University Join Forces To Promote Food Thermometer Use

On August 2, USDA and the state of Michigan joined forces to promote food thermometer usage when preparing meat and poultry to prevent foodborne illness with the innovative “Is It DONE Yet?” campaign. FSIS is partnering with Michigan State University’s National Food Safety and Toxicology Center, the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition and its Extension service in an effort to increase consumers’ use of food thermometers.

Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Elsa Murano kicked off the “Is It DONE Yet?” campaign last Monday at the Grand Rapids Van Andel Museum. The results of this educational initiative will help shape FSIS’ national approach to future consumer food safety promotions as well as thermometer usage.

“Is It Done Yet?” is a consumer-government partnership,” said Dr. Murano. “USDA is working aggressively to continue progress in preventing foodborne illness and protecting public health. Consumer awareness of basic food safety principles - especially using a food thermometer for checking meat, poultry and seafood as it cooks - can reduce the number of foodborne illnesses significantly.”

The use of a food thermometer is essential to ensure that meat and poultry have been cooked sufficiently to eliminate harmful pathogens. FSIS reports that, in the case of hamburgers, even if they are brown in the middle, one in four burgers is still not safely “done yet.”

“Using a food thermometer is like implementing a sound scientific procedure in the kitchen. It takes the guesswork out of whether meat, poultry or seafood is done, and it is one critical way to combat foodborne illness due to *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7 and other harmful bacteria,” said Dr. Murano.

For more information on food safety guidelines for the use of food thermometers, visit: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/

Export Requirement Updates

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

Cayman Islands

Costa Rica

Russia

Complete information is currently available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm



FSIS Establishes New Institute to Promote Food Safety

On August 3, Dr. Elsa Murano announced the establishment of the Food Safety Institute of the Americas, a cooperative educational and research organization designed to promote food safety and identify and develop educational programs throughout the Americas.

“Secretary Veneman challenged us to think broadly when it comes to improved food safety standards,” Murano said. “This institute will become a forum for scientific discussion and educational opportunities for government and industry in all countries to improve the safety of imported and exported meat, poultry and egg products.”

Murano has worked hard to improve food safety programs in the Western Hemisphere since being named to her post in the fall of 2001. Through speeches and personal contacts, she has worked to convince governments to raise the level of food safety and to become active participants in international food standard setting bodies like the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Murano said that many organizations—academic, governmental and nongovernmental—will be active partners in the FSIA. Food safety subject matter areas like public health, food security, Codex and animal and food production will be grouped into “colleges and departments” within the FSIA and entrusted to centers of academic expertise. The FSIA will also tap into existing networks of universities and organizations within North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

The Food Safety Institute of the Americas will be located in Miami, Florida, which is recognized as the gateway to the Americas. This location will enhance the institute’s ability to bring together experts quickly and to develop and carry out programs efficiently.

To learn more visit: www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/

THIS WEEK'S HOT WEB LINKS

Office of Policy, Program and Employee Development

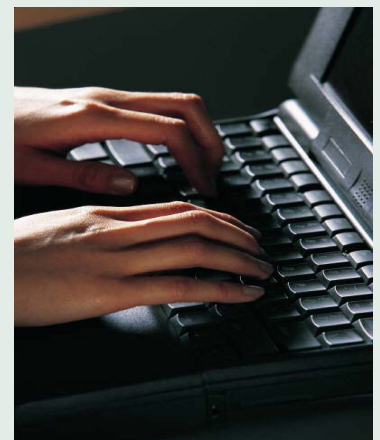
www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/OPPED/

FSIS Recalls

www.fsis.usda.gov/FSIS_Recalls/

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/usda_meat_&_poultry_hotline/



FSIS Announces 2003 *Salmonella* Data on Web Site

On Aug. 5, FSIS released regulatory sampling data showing a continued downward trend in positive tests for *Salmonella*.

The HACCP rule, implemented July 25, 1996, established *Salmonella* performance standards in seven categories of meat and poultry products: broilers, market hog, cows/bulls; steer/heifer; ground beef; ground chicken and ground turkey. As one part of an extensive science-based food safety system, FSIS collects and analyzes *Salmonella* samples to verify compliance with HACCP requirements. The testing program was designed to track establishment performance, therefore it might not be reflective of the nationwide prevalence of *Salmonella* in these products.

Despite minor yearly fluctuations in individual categories, *Salmonella* rates in all classes of products have decreased to levels well below the HACCP baseline prevalence estimates. Of the random regulatory samples collected and analyzed by FSIS in CY 2003, 3.8 percent tested positive for *Salmonella*, as compared with 4.29 percent in CY 2002; 5.03 percent in CY 2001; 5.31 percent in CY 2000; 7.26 percent in CY1999; and 10.65 percent in CY 1998. For more information and *Salmonella* testing data visit: www.fsis.usda.gov/science/microbiology

Two Remaining *E. coli* O157:H7 Workshops

The final workshops on new directives designed to strengthen *E. coli* O157:H7 prevention procedures will be held August 28 and September 11 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. They are designed for operators of small and very small federally-inspected plants, state-inspected plants, federal and state inspection personnel, members of academia and other interested parties. The remaining workshops are scheduled as follows:

August 28: Crown Plaza Philadelphia, 1800 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103, (215) 561-7500

September 11: The Ambassador, 3100 I-40 West, Amarillo, Texas 79102, (806) 358-6161

To pre-register for workshops please call (202) 690-6520 or e-mail renee.ellis@fsis.usda.gov. You may also register for workshops by calling (866) 553-3052 or via FSIS' Web site: www.fsis.usda.gov/News/Meetings_&_Events *E. coli* workshop materials are now available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Workshop_SmallPlants_ecoli/.

Featured Office of the Week



Field Services Laboratory

Scientific testing aids in the detection and prevention of foodborne illness outbreaks. To support FSIS' farm-to-table food safety strategies, three field laboratories conduct scientific tests in the disciplines of chemistry, microbiology and pathology.

To learn more visit:

[www.fsis.usda.gov/
About_Fsis/OPHS/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_Fsis/OPHS/)

Nominees Sought for Membership on National Advisory Committee

On August 5, USDA announced that nominees are being sought for membership on the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI).

Membership is drawn from a broad range of groups interested in food safety including producers, processors, exporters and importers of meat and poultry products, as well as those in academia, federal and state government officials and consumers. All of these groups are encouraged to nominate candidates as it is important for the NACMPI to represent diverse constituencies. Committee appointments are made by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Names of nominees and their typed curricula vitae, or resume, should be sent to Dr. Barbara J. Masters, Acting Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, Room 405-Aerospace Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-3700. The application must be postmarked no later than September 5, 2004.

Safe and Suitable Ingredients Used in the Production of Meat and Poultry Products

FSIS issued a change to Attachment 1 for FSIS Directive 7120.1. Attachment 1 identifies the substances that have been approved in 21 CFR for use in meat and poultry products as food additives, approved in GRAS notices and pre-market notifications, and approved in letters conveying acceptability determinations. Substances added to the attachment since the 11/3/2003 issuance of the directive are in bold. The directive can be found at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/7000_Series-Processed_Products/

To Contact the Constituent Update Editor

Crystal Straughn crystal.straughn@fsis.usda.gov (202) 720-9113



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.

Aug 7, 2004

Dixboro Fair & Artisans on the Green Celebration (Ann Arbor, Mich.)

Aug 8, 2004

Kroger Grocery Store (Ann Arbor, Mich.)

Aug 9, 2004

Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum (Ann Arbor, Mich.)

For more dates visit: www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Mobile_Events_by_Date/