



# FSIS Constituent Update

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Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety

## Japan To Reopen Markets To U.S. Beef Producers

After three days of talks in Tokyo last week, U.S. and Japanese officials announced the framework of an agreement to allow the import of U.S. beef. Japan banned U.S. beef imports last December after a cow in Washington State tested positive for BSE. Japan had been the biggest foreign buyer of U.S. beef, with sales exceeding \$1.7 billion in 2003.

"I congratulate the officials from both governments for their extra efforts in reaching this accord," said Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "It is extremely important for our livestock producers and the entire beef industry. It should further strengthen the economic performance we have seen in that industry throughout the year."

The agreement allows U.S. beef imports only if it can be proved that the products originate from animals that are younger than 21 months. The U.S. also agreed that it will resume importing the specialty Kobe beef which is produced from Wagyu cattle.

Beef shipments to Japan will not begin immediately. The Japanese must first complete their regulatory process for revising their domestic regulations. This will replace the demand for 100 percent BSE testing with the requirement that testing will only be conducted for animals aged 21 months and older. Regulations to permit importation of beef from animals 20 months and younger also must be published.

"The agreement reached in Tokyo will enable our beef trade to resume under a special marketing program," said Veneman. "We then will review that program after six months of operation, with a view toward returning trade to more normal patterns."

A special study, which will look at the correlation between chronological and physiological age, will also have to be completed within the next 45 days. The study will be conducted by USDA/AMS in close collaboration with Japanese experts. For more information and questions and answers on the U.S.-Japan Beef Trade Agreement go to: [www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome)

## Export Requirement Updates

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

**Canada**

**Iran**

**Mauritius**

**Russia**

**Sri Lanka**

Complete information is available online at:

[www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm)



# FSIS Issues Notice on Movement of Product Between Custom Exempt Facilities

On October 20, FSIS issued Notice 53-04 to explain the conditions under which custom exempt products can be transported between custom exempt facilities and reiterate policies related to Specified Risk Materials (SRMs) as defined in 9 CFR 310.22(a).

## Transporting Custom Exempt Product Between Facilities

According to Section 23(a) of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 623(a)) and the regulations at 9 CFR 303.1(a)(2) if an owner wishes to move custom exempt product from one custom exempt establishment to another for further processing, the owner must clearly be in control of the product, either by having direct physical control or by giving written direction to the custom facility owner or operator to move the product.

If the custom exempt facility is transporting product, Office of Field Operations (OFO) personnel will verify that the facility has records that demonstrate that the product was or is being transported at the product owner's direction (9 CFR 303.1(b)(3) and part 320). OFO personnel also will verify that the receiving custom exempt facility also maintains records to verify the owner's control.

## Custom Exempt Products and SRMs

As set out in 9 CFR 310.22(a) the following SRMs are adulterants in all cattle:

- The tonsils
- And distal ileum (the rest of the small intestine must be removed); and
- For cattle 30 months of age and older:
  - The skull, eyes, brain and trigeminal ganglia,
  - The vertebral column - spinal cord and dorsal root ganglia (DRG).

The regulation 9 CFR 303.1(b)(1) states that exempted custom prepared products .. shall not be adulterated as defined in paragraph 1(m) of the Federal Meat Inspection Act. Therefore, custom exempt product cannot contain SRMs. To view this notice go to: [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Notice\\_53-04/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Notice_53-04/).

## THIS WEEK'S HOT WEB LINKS

### Regulatory Enforcement

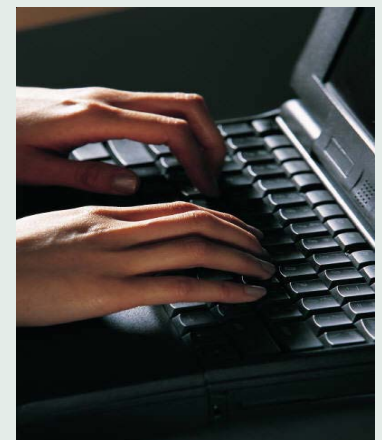
[www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Regulatory\\_Enforcement/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Regulatory_Enforcement/)

### Food Safety Educator

[www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Food\\_Safety\\_Educator](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Food_Safety_Educator)

### FSIS Forms

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



## National Advisory Committee is Re-chartered

On October 22, FSIS issued a notice announcing the re-chartering of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF). The Committee has been renewed in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The establishment of the Committee was recommended by a 1985 report of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Food Protection, Subcommittee on Microbiological Criteria, "An Evaluation of the Role of Microbiological Criteria for Foods." The current charter for the NACMCF is available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/About\\_FSIS/NACMCF\\_Charter/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/NACMCF_Charter/)

NACMCF advises and provides recommendations to the Secretaries on the development of microbiological criteria by which the safety and wholesomeness of food can be assessed, including criteria for microorganisms that indicate whether foods have been adequately and appropriately processed.

Re-chartering of NACMCF is necessary because of the need for external expert advice on the range of scientific and technical issues that must be addressed by the Federal sponsors in meeting their statutory responsibilities. The Committee is required to meet at least twice per year.

For more information contact Karen Thomas, Advisory Committee Specialist, by phone at (202) 690-6620 or by mail at USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 333 Aerospace Center, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-3700.

## New Speech on Food Security Available Online

Undersecretary for Food Safety Dr. Elsa Murano's speech delivered before the "Food Terrorism Summit" last week at the Terrorist Threat Integration Center is now available on FSIS' Web site. Dr. Murano presented USDA's initiatives to secure the food supply from intentional contamination.

To read the entire presentation titled, "Security and Safety of Meat, Poultry and Egg Products," go to: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/2004\\_Speeches/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/2004_Speeches/)

**To Submit Comments or Questions, Contact the Editor at:**

[fsisupdate@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:fsisupdate@fsis.usda.gov) (202) 720-9113

## Featured Office of the Week



### Office of Field Operations

The Office of Field Operations (OFO) manages FSIS' inspection and enforcement activities nationwide, ensuring that domestically produced meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, secure, wholesome and properly labeled. To learn more visit: [www.fsis.usda.gov/About\\_FSIS/OFO](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/OFO)