



FSIS Constituent Update

Volume 5, Issue 44

December 17, 2004

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety

Final Rule on Food Labeling

FSIS published a final rule this week that establishes January 1, 2008, as the uniform compliance date for new food labeling regulations that are issued between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006. The compliance date minimizes the economic impact of labeling changes by providing an orderly industry adjustment to new labeling requirements and timely implementation of changes for federally-inspected meat and poultry establishments. The rule will become effective January 13, 2005.

The U.S. Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration (HHS-FDA) currently has a uniform compliance date for labeling regulations of January 1, 2006, for all changes affecting non-meat and non-poultry food products. HHS-FDA is expected to publish a notice to establish the next uniform compliance date of January 1, 2008. FSIS' establishment of this date will harmonize the compliance schedules of both agencies, allowing industry to plan for labeling changes across all product lines.

Jury Recommends Death Penalty for Alexander

A jury determined that Stuart Alexander, owner of Santos Linguisa Factory in San Leandro, Calif., should receive the death penalty for the vicious murders of FSIS compliance officers Jean Hillery and Tom Quadros and California Food and Agriculture Investigator Bill Shaline. The recommendation was announced on Tuesday, December 13, at the Alameda County Superior Court.

"FSIS appreciates the years of hard work of all involved in bringing Alexander to justice," said FSIS Acting Administrator Dr. Barbara J. Masters. "While this case has come to a close, our memories of these brave and committed public servants remain eternal. The FSIS family will never forget the contributions Jean, Tom and Bill made to their profession, their families and to their communities."

Jurors had convicted Alexander of three counts of first-degree murder this October. Alameda County Superior Court Judge Vernon Nakahara still needs to formally sentence Alexander. The judge will have the option of reducing the sentence to life in prison. That hearing is scheduled for February 15, 2005.

Export Requirement Updates

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

Canada

European Union

Mexico

Romania

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



Reminder: Public Meeting to Discuss Food Labeling Agenda Items

On January 19, 2005, a public meeting will be held to provide information and receive comments on agenda items to be discussed at the 33rd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labeling (CCFL) in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, May 9-13, 2005.

The public meeting will be held from 1-4 p.m. in the Auditorium, Room 1A-003, Harvey W. Wiley Federal Building, 5100 Paint Branch Parkway, College Park, Md. Among the agenda items to be discussed are: *Proposed Draft Guidelines for the Labeling of Foods Obtained Through Certain Techniques of Genetic Modification/Genetic Engineering: Labeling Provisions and Definitions; Country of Origin Labeling; Discussion paper on advertising; and Proposed Draft Amendment to the General Standard for the Labeling of Prepackaged Foods*. A complete agenda for the meeting can be found at www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp.

The CCFL drafts provisions on labeling applicable to all foods; considers, amends if necessary and endorses specific provisions on labeling of draft standards, codes of practice and guidelines prepared by other Codex committees; studies specific labeling problems assigned to it by the Commission; and studies problems associated with the advertisement of food with particular reference to claims and misleading descriptions.

For further information about the CCFL, contact U.S. Delegate, Leslye Fraser, J.D., Director, Office of Regulations and Policy, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, FDA at (301) 436-2378.

For information concerning public meeting or for a sign language interpreter contact Ellen Matten, International Issues Analyst, U.S. Codex Office, FSIS, at (202) 205-7760.

The Constituent Update will not publish next week due to the holiday schedule. The next issue will publish December 30. Have a happy and safe holiday season.



To submit comments or questions, contact the editor at:

fsisupdate@fsis.usda.gov (202) 720-9113



Holiday Food Safety

Here's how to protect festive treats from bacteria:

Chocolate chip, macarons and gingerbread . . . how sweet are the aromas of freshly-baked cookies around the holidays. Treat your tummy to these tasty yummys, but avoid licking the spoon or the mixing bowl if the batter contains uncooked eggs. Tasting cookie or cake batter can be tempting, but remember that *Salmonella Enteritidis* could be lurking in those uncooked eggs. If any of your holiday recipes call for uncooked or lightly-cooked eggs, you can modify them by cooking the eggs thoroughly or by using pasteurized egg products.

For more information on holiday food safety visit:

www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/