



FSIS Constituent Update

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

Statement from Dr. Elsa Murano, USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Regarding CDC Foodborne Illness Data

Reductions in foodborne illnesses announced today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that USDA's science-based policies to combat deadly bacteria in meat, poultry and egg products are effective.

“The CDC, in its annual report on the incidence of infections from foodborne pathogens, noted significant declines from 1996 to 2003 in illnesses caused by *E. coli* O157:H7 (42%), *Salmonella* (17%), *Campylobacter* (28%) and *Yersinia* (49%). Illnesses caused by *Salmonella Typhimurium* (typically associated with meat and poultry) decreased by 38%. Most significantly, between 2002 and 2003, illnesses caused by *E. coli* O157:H7, typically associated with ground beef, dropped by 36%. The reduction in *E. coli* O157:H7 illnesses brings the U.S. very close to achieving the ‘Healthy People 2010’ goal of 1.0 case per 100,000 people.

“The report adds to the body of evidence indicating real progress is being made toward our goals of preventing illness and protecting public health. In addition to testing results, recalls for *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7 and *Listeria* in FSIS regulated products also dropped from 65 in 2002 to 28 in 2003.”

In the past 18 months, FSIS has implemented a series of policies and directives to control *E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella* and *Listeria*. You may view a list of these policies and directives at: <http://www.usda.gov/Newsroom/0176.04.html>

Export Requirement Updates

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

Canada
Indonesia
Mexico
Nicaragua
Thailand

Complete information can be found at:

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



FSIS Stands Behind the Victims of the San Leandro Sausage Factory Shooting

On Monday, April 26, 2004, a jury heard opening statements in the San Leandro Sausage Factory murder trial. Stewart Alexander, owner of the Santos Linguisa meat processing plant in San Leandro, California, is accused of murder in the deaths of FSIS Compliance Officers Tom Quadros and Jean Hillery and California Investigator Bill Shaline at his Santos Linguisa Factory in San Leandro.

The defense strategy is to paint the federal compliance officers and state investigator as being responsible for driving the defendant into a murderous rage. FSIS finds that position outrageous and without a shred of credibility or believability. A USDA spokesman present at the trial stated "to victimize these dedicated public health servants, who were murdered in the line of duty serving the American people, is the most vile and vicious form of slander. FSIS stands behind the name and reputations of our murdered colleagues and with the victims' families during this painful ordeal."

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 a public meeting on 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, D.C.

If you would like to attend any of these meetings or need more information, 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.

THIS WEEK'S HOT WEB LINKS

Requirements for State Programs

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Requirements_for_State_Programs/index.asp

Risk Assessments

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Risk_Assessments/index.asp

Freedom of Information Act

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/FOIA/index.asp>



How to Use FSIS' "Ask Karen"

Karen is a virtual representative on FSIS' newly designed Web site who is equipped to answer your questions about the safe storage, preparation and handling of meat and poultry products. Karen can also answer questions about the prevention of foodborne illness and disease. Type your question in the text box and select "Ask". The answer to your question will appear below the dotted line at the bottom of the page. If Karen is unable to answer your exact question she can suggest a list of related questions to help you meet your food safety needs. Karen can also provide links to other Web pages with additional information. For the best results, keep your questions brief. Ask multiple concise questions in place of one longer one.

For more information or to ask "Karen" a question please visit: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp#Question

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 USDA 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.

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.

To Contact the Constituent Update Editor

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

Featured Office of the Week



The Office of Food Security and Emergency Preparedness

The Office of Food Security and Emergency Preparedness (OFSEP) manages all homeland security activities within FSIS. OFSEP makes sure that policy makers, scientists, field staff and management are prepared to prevent and respond to any food security threat. For more information please visit: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSYS/OFSEP/index.asp