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Food Safety and
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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Announces Initiative to Reduce *Salmonella* in Meat and Poultry

FSIS issued a news release and published a *Federal Register* notice on February 21 titled, *Salmonella Verification Sample Result Reporting: Agency Policy and Use in Public Health Protection*. The news release is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_022306_01/index.asp.

The notice announced how the agency will use the results from its *Salmonella* verification sampling program for meat and poultry establishments to enhance public health protection. The agency also changed how it reports these results. These actions follow an April 2003 FSIS *Federal Register* notice asking for public comments on improving agency policy. The current notice responds to the comments received and presents the agency's views on the issues raised in the 2003 notice.

FSIS held a public meeting on February 23 and 24 in Atlanta, Ga., to discuss advances on post-harvest interventions to reduce *Salmonella* in poultry. The meeting informed establishments of the research that was conducted pertaining to *Salmonella* testing for broilers and the Agency's policy to protect public health.

Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond and FSIS Administrator Dr. Barbara Masters delivered opening remarks. FSIS officials provided an overview of the 2005 broiler and ground poultry *Salmonella* data and explained FSIS' *Salmonella* verification categories for broilers. Industry officials explained the details of a recent study between visible fecal contamination and *Salmonellae* incidence in broiler slaughter operations. Industry officials also discussed *Salmonella* interventions in the U.S. broiler industry.

The agency is accepting comments on the *Federal Register* notice through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by electronic mail at fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov. The notice is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>.

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Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following:

European Union

Switzerland

Complete information can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda>.

Cooking Safely in Microwave Ovens

Microwave ovens can play an important role at mealtime, but special care must be taken when cooking or reheating meat, poultry, fish and eggs to make sure they are prepared safely.

To access safe microwaving tips, visit FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Cooking_Safely_in_the_Microwave/index.asp.

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gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/04-026N.pdf. The *Salmonella* progress report is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Progress_Report_Salmonella_Testing/index.asp.

FSIS Issues Notice on Export Stamp Manufacturing Error

FSIS issued Notice 8-06 on February 23 to announce an export stamp manufacturing error.

Because of a manufacturing error, a recent batch of FSIS export stamps received at the FSIS Field Supply Center was not in the format described in the *Code of Federal Regulations*. The incorrect stamps were distributed with an "H" to the left and right of the certificate number instead of a star.

Office of Field Operations (OFO) personnel possessing export stamps shown in Notice 8-06 under the "example of an incorrect stamp" should stop using the incorrect stamps immediately for any export activity including

marking boxes and for application to certificates. Only stamps in the format indicated in the regulations and shown in the notice should be used.

OFO personnel should not return the stamps; however they should cut off or deface the rubber imprinting of the seal. District managers may need to reallocate correct versions of export stamps among establishments until they are again available in the Field Supply Center.

This notice is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&policies/Notice_08-06/index.asp. Contact the Technical Service Center with questions at (800) 233-3935.

FSIS to Conduct On-Site Reviews of Four State Inspection Systems

FSIS began comprehensive reviews of the 28 state meat and poultry inspection programs in 2003. The reviews were initiated due to an increased agency emphasis on review of all FSIS programs and activities and because report language for the 2002 Farm Bill called for USDA to provide Congress with a report on a full review of state inspection programs.

As part of this effort, FSIS created a review manual that contains a two-part methodology for the state reviews: annual self assessments by the states and FSIS on-site reviews. The self assessments are completed each year. To date, FSIS has conducted on-site reviews in 20 randomly selected states.

In April, FSIS will begin on-site reviews of state inspection systems in Indiana, Louisiana, Maine and West Virginia.