



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

Volume 8, Issue 41  
October 12, 2007



# FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## Agency Officials Discuss Steps to Reduce *E. coli*

Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond and FSIS officials conducted two separate telephone conference calls on Oct. 9, one with industry and one with consumer groups. The calls were held to discuss the recent Topps recall and to share steps the agency is taking to reduce *E. coli* O157:H7.

During the call, Dr. David Goldman, assistant administrator for the Office of Public Health Science, discussed the timeline for the investigation and the actions taken by FSIS. The timeline is available at the USDA Web site at [www.usda.gov/Newsroom/](http://www.usda.gov/Newsroom/) under "Transcripts and Speeches, Release No. 0282.07."

Dr. Daniel Engeljohn, deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Policy, Program and Employee Development, addressed steps the agency is taking to reduce *E. coli* O157:H7. These include:

- FSIS will require all beef plants to show they have effectively controlled *E. coli* O157:H7 by using a checklist to verify controls announced in 2002.
- To better identify corporations whose controls may not be sufficient and may jeopardize public health, FSIS will review corporate practices, as well as individual plant practices within a corporation, to control *E. coli* O157:H7.
- When there is evidence of an illness linked to FSIS regulated product taken from a consumer's home, FSIS will establish a stronger threshold for requesting a recall or taking other regulatory action.
- FSIS will dispatch specially trained investigators to conduct a food safety assessment, a thorough scientific review of the plant, when there is a positive testing result.

### Inside this Issue

Notices .....	2
Export Requirements .....	2
STEC White Paper .....	2

## Export Requirement Updates



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

### European Union

#### Russia

Complete information can be found at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&Policies/Export\\_Information/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/Export_Information/index.asp).

### FSIS Posts White Paper on Non-O157 STEC

FSIS posted a white paper addressing Non-O157:H7 Shiga toxin-producing *E.coli*, otherwise known as STEC.

A public meeting on this topic will be held on Oct. 17, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the George Mason University Arlington campus, 3401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 244, Arlington, Va.

Visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&Events/Meetings\\_&Events/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&Events/Meetings_&Events/index.asp) to view more details.

## FSIS to Issue Notices

FSIS frequently publishes notices to enhance the agency's efforts in protecting public health.

Notice 64-07 titled, *Scheduling Food Assessments and Intensified Verification Testing* was published today, Oct. 12.

This notice clarifies when district office personnel are to schedule enforcement, investigations, and analysis officers to conduct food safety assessments (FSAs) and intensified verification testing in response to a positive pathogen result in FSIS product testing.

The instructions for scheduling FSAs for *Escherichia coli* (*E.coli*) O157:H7 positive results in this notice replace instructions found in Directive 10,010.1, *Microbiological Testing Program for Escherichia coli O157:H7 in Raw Ground Beef Products and Raw Ground Beef Components and Beef Patty Components*.

Finally, the notice also states that if another government entity identifies *Listeria monocytogenes*, *E.coli* O157:H7 or *Salmonella* in meat or poultry products, FSIS will conduct follow-up testing on the basis of this finding in the same way that it would if the finding were an FSIS result.

To view this notice, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations\\_&policies/FSIS\\_Notices\\_Index/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp).

Notices on the following topics are expected to be released within the next month:

- Monthly report of export library changes reflecting updated requirements;
- The cancellation of the Meat and Poultry Manual and other obsolete documents;
- Adequate documentation of non-compliances in proper format at egg product plants;
- FSIS' intention to convert Egg Products Handbook and guidance documents to related directives or notices;
- Instructions for multiple follow-up samples on product which tests positive for *E. coli* O157:H7; and
- Instructions for inspection program personnel to use the askFSIS application for viewing and submitting questions.