FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Agency Takes the Next Steps for *Salmonella* Initiative Program

FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice on January 28 that announced the *Salmonella* Initiative Program, an incentive program for meat and poultry slaughter establishments to control *Salmonella* in their operations.

Establishments are encouraged to apply for the *Salmonella* Initiative Program, since the Agency will soon implement the program for establishments that do not have an existing waiver, such as provisions under the HACCP-based Inspection Models Project (HIMP) or for On-Line Reprocessing, and those plants that do not request additional inspection resources.

In addition, the Agency will clarify timelines for establishments to inform FSIS of their participation in the program and will provide further information to establishments who choose not to participate in it. FSIS will also explain how the Agency will handle waivers for establishments that now operate under HIMP or On-Line Reprocessing. If those establishments wish to continue to operate under such waivers, they may do so as long as they also agree to comply with the program.

Establishments that apply to participate in the program must agree to *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* (if applicable) and generic *Escherichia coli* sampling of their product as it is detailed in the January 28 *Federal Register* notice. Every establishment that wishes to participate in the *Salmonella* Initiative Program must also agree to share its sampling data with FSIS and make the data available for copy or electronic transfer.

An establishment is not required to be in FSIS performance Category 1 to be eligible for, or remain in the program. The Agency will review

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applications for the program as received but will give priority to those establishments that are in Category 1.

FSIS will publish a follow-up *Federal Register* notice in which the comment period will be re-opened on specific *Salmonella* Initiative Program issues for 60 days.

More information will be made available on FSIS' Web site at *www.fsis. usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Federal_Register_Publications_ &_Related_Documents/index.asp*. Also, be sure to check the future issues of the FSIS *Constituent Update* as more details develop.

FSIS Updates on *Salmonella* Performance Results for Establishments

The Agency began publishing results of completed sample sets from its *Salmonella* Verification Program for young chicken (broiler) slaughter establishments by their performance category on March 28.

FSIS posts updated results on its Web site around the 15th of each month for young chicken slaughter establishments and will begin posting Category 2 and 3 establishments that slaughter market hogs and turkeys. The Agency has decided not to publish Category 2 establishments in a product class if 90 percent or more of its active or seasonal establishments are in Category 1 and none of its establishments is in Category 3.

Publication of *Salmonella* sample set results for young chicken establishments was first presented in a *Federal Register* notice of February 27, 2006, and was recently described in detail within the January 28 *Federal Register* notice.

For more information and to access the reports go to *www.fsis.usda. gov/Science/Salmonella_Verification_Testing_Program/index.asp*.

Food Defense Plan

FSIS will conduct a survey on August 1, to determine how many FSIS-regulated slaughter and processing plants have voluntarily adopted functional food defense plans.

A documented set of procedures will improve an establishment's ability to respond quickly. A food defense plan also helps to maintain a safe working environment for employees, provide a quality product to customers, and be particularly helpful during emergencies.

Look to future issues of the *FSIS Constituent Update* and visit FSIS' Web site at *www. fsis.usda.gov/Food_Defense_ &_Emergency_Response/ Guidance_Materials/index. as*p to review guidelines for completing a functional defense plan.

FSIS Issues Notices

FSIS issued Notice 37-08 on May 15 titled *Consumer Complaint Monitoring System* (CCMS) 2.0.

This notice announces the launch of a modified *Consumer Complaint Monitoring System*. Since 2001, FSIS has captured consumer complaints in an electronic database used to record, triage and track complaints regarding FSIS-regulated meat, poultry, and processed egg products. CCMS helps to identify and trace adulterated product in commerce and allows the Agency to respond to, and mitigate, possible food safety hazards.

This modification was developed to address limitations of the original system and to improve the Agency's detection, analysis and response capabilities to consumer complaints.

The agency also issued Notice 38-08 titled: *In-Commerce System And Administrative Enforcement Report System* on May 15.

The purpose of this notice is to announce the release of the In-Commerce System and describe its features/uses. This new Web-based system will be used by the Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review, Office of Field Operations and Office of International Affairs to document and report compliance and enforcement activities.

Notices 37-08 and 38-08 are available on FSIS' Web site at *www.fsis. usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp*.