



United States
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Food Safety and
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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS to Hold Regulatory Education Workshops

FSIS will hold regulatory education workshops for owners and operators of small and very small plants in California and Arkansas on April 8 and 9.

The workshops will cover a variety of topics and prerequisite programs, including hazard analysis and critical control points, sanitation performance standards, sanitation standard operating procedures, rules of practice, food defense strategies, *E. coli* O157:H7 workshops, and the following notices:

- 65-07, *Notice of Reassessment for Escherichia coli O157:H7 Control and Completion of a Checklist for all Beef Operations;*
- 66-07, *Multiple Follow-Up Sampling After FSIS Positive Escherichia coli O157:H7 Results;* and
- 68-07, *Routine Sampling and Testing of Raw Ground Beef Components Other Than Trim and Imported Raw Ground Beef Components for Escherichia coli O157:H7.*

The April 8 session will be held at the Radisson Suites Hotel, 1211 East Garvey Street, Covina, Calif. The April 9 session will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott Little Rock West, 10900 Financial Centre Park, Little Rock, Ark. The workshops will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at each location.

To register by phone, please call (800) 336-3747. Online registration forms and information about upcoming sessions can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp. Pre-registration is encouraged, but not required.

Inside this Issue

International Meat and Poultry Inspection Seminars	2
Notice	2
<i>E.coli</i> Public Meeting	3
Food Safety Recommendations	3

Export Requirement Updates



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

United Arab Emirates

Complete information can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp.

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

As a reminder, the extended comment period on the planned public health-based slaughter inspection system for young chickens will close on March 24; however, if you experience difficulty in submitting comments, FSIS will accept them through close of business Friday, March 28.

Register to Attend 2008 Meat and Poultry Inspection Seminars for International Government Officials

FSIS will hold the first of three meat and poultry inspection seminars for international officials in Puerto Rico from May 19 through June 6.

The purpose of these seminars is to familiarize international government officials with inspection regulations and procedures used by USDA to assure that the nation's meat, poultry and egg products are safe, wholesome and properly labeled.

The seminars will cover issues from farm to table, including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and pathogen reduction, animal production, import and export procedures and the roles of the Food and Drug Administration, state and local inspection agencies.

The first seminar will be held in cooperation with the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), Mayaguez. The UPR seminar includes basic HACCP certification and in-depth review of FSIS verification of HACCP and sanitation requirements.

Other topics and activities include foreign inspection program equivalence as well as field trips to import and export locations and processing and slaughter plants.

For more information regarding the seminars, visit FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/2008_Meat_&_Poultry_Inspection_Seminars/index.asp.

FSIS Issues Questions and Answers for Notice 18-08

On March 17, FSIS issued Notice 18-08 titled, *Questions & Answers Related to Raw Meat and Poultry Product Performance Standards for Salmonella Sampling and Reporting*.

This notice responds to questions concerning the responsibilities of inspection program personnel and District Offices reporting *Salmonella* performance standard sampling results and scheduling *Salmonella* performance standard sampling after a failed set.

Notice 18-08 is available on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp.

Be Food Safe! Prepare With Care

Learn how to prepare, handle, and store food safely to keep you and your family safe. Bacteria can grow on meat, poultry, seafood, eggs and dairy products, as well as cut-up or cooked vegetables and fruits.



CLEAN: Wash hands and surfaces often. Bacteria is everywhere and cleanliness is a major factor in preventing foodborne illness.

SEPARATE: Don't cross-contaminate. Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing, or storing. Never place cooked food on a plate which previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood.

COOK: Cook food to proper temperatures. Use a food thermometer to be sure!

CHILL: Refrigerate promptly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours or sooner.

FSIS to Hold Public Meeting on *E. coli* O157:H7

FSIS will hold a public meeting on April 9 and 10 to focus on *E. coli* O157:H7. The purpose of the meeting is to have a discussion with stakeholders on recent spikes in recalls/illnesses related to *E. coli* O157:H7, provide updates on FSIS initiatives and build a foundation for establishing solutions to address the challenges this pathogen causes.

More information on the meeting, including the agenda, will be made available in future issues of the *FSIS Constituent Update*. Also, be sure to check the Meetings and Events page of FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Meetings_&_Events/index.asp for more updates.

Keeping Food Safe During An Emergency

USDA issued a news release providing recommendations to regions affected by severe weather and flooding in the United States in an effort to minimize the potential for foodborne illnesses due to food spoilage from power outages and other problems that are often associated with severe weather events.

Visit www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_031908_01/index.asp to review helpful food safety tips to prepare your family for a possible weather emergency.

Other Helpful Resources:

FSIS also has available a Public Service Announcement (PSA), available in 30- and 60-second versions, illustrating practical food safety recommendations for handling and consuming foods stored in refrigerators and freezers during, and after, a power outage. Consumers are encouraged to view the PSA at www.fsis.usda.gov/news/Food_Safety_Videos/.

Consumers with food safety questions can "Ask Karen," the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at AskKaren.gov.

The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is also available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

