



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Volume 10, Issue 28
July 11, 2008



FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Final Rule Makes Retail Lists Available to Consumers During Recalls

Secretary Ed Schafer announced today that USDA will make public retail stores that have received products that are subject to a Class I recall starting next month.

“The identity of retail stores with recalled meat and poultry from their suppliers has always been a missing piece of information for the public during a recall,” said Schafer. “People want to know if they need to be on the lookout for recalled meat and poultry from their local store and by providing lists of retail outlets during recalls, USDA’s Food Safety Inspection Service will improve public health protection by better informing consumers.”

FSIS will post on its Web site a list of retail consignees that received products subject to Class I recalls, the highest risk category, generally within three to ten business days of issuing the recall release. FSIS will not identify distribution centers, institutions or restaurants, since they prepare food for immediate consumption without packaging that may be identifiable or available to consumers. However, retail stores to include supermarkets or other grocery stores, convenience stores, meat markets, wholesale clubs and supercenters will be identified.

The list of retail stores and locations compiled by FSIS personnel during recall effectiveness checks will be posted on FSIS’ Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov and shared with state and local public health officials where the retail stores are located.

The combination of information about the recalled product and a list of retail destinations will provide a stronger message to consumers who generally rely on media and government sources for information about food safety.

To view the related press release, visit www.usda.gov/wps/portal//ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2008/07/0183.xml.

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Export Requirement Updates



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

Cuba

Hong Kong

Indonesia

Republic of Korea

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



AskKaren.gov

FSIS Updates *E. coli* O157:H7 Reports

FSIS' *E. coli* O157:H7 testing data has been updated to include information through July 6, 2008.

The table below reports year-to-date information for the current year and one year prior for raw ground beef and raw ground beef components. The raw ground beef category has data for federal plants and retail stores, and the raw ground beef components category has data for federal plants and imports.

Results from Analysis of Raw Ground Beef and Raw Ground Beef Component Samples for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7

Raw Ground Beef						
Source	As of July 8, 2007			As of July 6, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	5,914	14	0.24	6,085	17	0.28
Retail Stores	99	0	0.00	239	0	0.00
Raw Ground Beef Components						
Source	As of July 8, 2007			As of July 6, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	217	2	0.92	932	2	0.21
Imports	0	0	0.00	276	0	0.00
The above information is based upon data in the FSIS electronic data system as of July 6, 2008.						

Positive raw ground beef test results for federal plants continue to be slightly higher than last year (17 in CY08 versus 14 in CY07). The majority of product that tests positive is identified while the product is still held at the establishment. In these cases, the contaminated raw product does not enter the commercial food supply as raw ground beef. Establishments may divert contaminated product to cooking which kills the *E. coli* bacteria.

If the product is released before the positive test result is found, a recall is likely to occur. To date, FSIS testing in 2008 has resulted in one recall due to a positive test result. In comparison, there was also one recall that occurred as a result of FSIS testing at this point in 2007.

Other recalls have occurred as a result of outcomes from testing programs run by the establishment or due to human illness. Information about recalls can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/index.asp.

Food Defense Plans



FSIS released a podcast titled “*Developing Food Defense Plans*” this week to help plant owners and operators to learn the importance of developing a solid plan through a three step process.

A food defense plan also helps to maintain a safe working environment for employees, provide a quality product to customers and is particularly helpful during emergencies.



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.

Visit FSIS’ Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Food_Safety_Inspection_Podcasts/index.asp to review this helpful resource.

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

FSIS will host the second of three meat and poultry inspection seminars for international officials in Texas between August 4 and 15.

This two-week seminar will be held at the Texas A&M University, AgriLife Center Extension and Research facility in Amarillo, Texas and will provide substantial information for senior international government officials focusing on verification and enforcement of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point and pathogen reduction regulations.

The intention 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 processed egg products are safe, wholesome and properly labeled.

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 Directives and Notices

The Agency issued Directive 5100.1, Revision 2 titled *Enforcement, Investigations and Analysis Officer (EIAO) Comprehensive Food Safety Assessment Methodology* on July 10.

The purpose of this directive is to provide instructions to EIAOs of the methodology that should be used when they conduct comprehensive food safety assessments. It also details how to document findings and cancels Directive 5100.1 titled *Enforcement, Investigations and Analysis (EIAO) Comprehensive Food Safety Assessment Methodology* issued September 30, 2005.

FSIS also issued Notice 46-08 titled *Export of Beef and Beef Products to Korea* on July 10.

This document explains what products are eligible or ineligible for export to Korea and illustrates certification requirements. The notice also describes that a statement of verification letter is no longer required to accompany exported beef and beef products to Korea if the slaughter dates are on or after the establishment’s quality system assessment program approval date.

Directives and notices are available on FSIS’ Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp.