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# FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## FSIS Updates *E. coli* O157:H7 Reports

FSIS has updated *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) O157:H7 testing data to include information through September 30, 2008.

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

Raw Ground Beef						
Source	As of September 30, 2007			As of September 28, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	9,142	18	0.20	8,631	33	0.38
Retail Stores	133	0	0.00	297	0	0.00
Imports	61	0	0.00	38	1	2.63
Raw Ground Beef Components						
Source	As of September 30, 2007			As of September 28, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	460	2	0.43	1,652	11	0.67
Imports	0	0	0.00	403	2	0.50
The above information is based upon data in the FSIS electronic data system as of September 30, 2008. Results are from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs.						

Sampling of imported product is randomly assigned by an automated import information system after the shipment has arrived in the United States and has been presented for import reinspection. A sample is collected from a shipment and sent to FSIS labs for testing. Under routine verification sampling, the importer can voluntarily hold the product at the official import establishment pending Agency testing results.

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## Export Requirement Updates



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

**Japan**

**Republic of Korea**

**Taiwan**

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).

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## Flood Brochure Is Now Available on FSIS' Web Site

FSIS recently posted a new brochure titled *Flooding: A Checklist for Small and Very Small Meat, Poultry, and Egg Processing Plants* to the Agency's Web site.

This brochure is designed to help small and very small plants prepare for, respond to, and recover from flooding, listing action items in the case of an emergency.

The brochure is currently featured on the small & very small plants landing page on FSIS' Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Small\\_Very\\_Small\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Small_Very_Small_Plants/index.asp).

## *E. coli* Testing Results ...

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Positive samples from imported products result in an intensified level of sampling of subsequent shipments from the foreign establishment. Under this intensified sampling, the next 15 consecutive shipments from the foreign establishment are tested and FSIS requires that the product be held during this period.

Additional information about the import sampling program can be found in Directive 10010.1 titled *Microbiological Testing Program for Escherichia Coli O157:H7 in Raw Ground Beef Products and Raw Ground Beef Components and Beef Patty Components*. Individual positive results from the raw ground beef sampling programs for 2008 are reported on FSIS' Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/2008\\_Ecoli\\_Positive\\_Results/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/2008_Ecoli_Positive_Results/index.asp).

## USDA to Discuss Animal Raising Claims

FSIS and USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will host a public meeting on October 14 to discuss and review its policies on the use of animal raising claims in the labeling of meat and poultry products.

FSIS evaluates animal raising claims by considering information on animal production practices submitted by companies as part of their label approval requests. However, recent events concerning labeling claims related to the use of antibiotics in the raising of poultry have led the Agency to question its ability to verify that labels of meat and poultry products that contain animal raising claims are truthful and not misleading.

Therefore, FSIS and AMS will solicit public input and review its policies on claims related to the use of antibiotics in poultry and on animal raising claims in general. The Agency is asking the following questions that it hopes to receive comments on:

- Should FSIS continue to approve label claims based on animal raising standards developed by private third-party certifiers and by companies themselves if FSIS has reviewed the standards and determines that they would not render a claim false or misleading;
- Should FSIS establish any performance criteria or standards for third-party certifiers and should the Agency require that third-party certifiers be reviewed and approved by AMS;

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## Review New Podcasts for September

FSIS recently released new podcasts with food safety tips helpful to consumers.



- September 10 – *Questions from the Hotline: Food Safety for College Students*

In this episode, a specialist from the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline answers an assortment of food safety questions called in by college students and their parents.

- September 17 – *Food Safety for the At Risk Population*

This episode presents practical information to help reduce the risk of foodborne illness for those who are at risk.

- September 24 – *Food Recalls*

This episode provides valuable information about recalls of meat, poultry or processed egg products.

Check out these new podcasts on FSIS' Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Food\\_Safety\\_at\\_Home\\_Podcasts/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Food_Safety_at_Home_Podcasts/index.asp).

## Animal Raising Claims...

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- Should FSIS establish minimum standards that companies would have to achieve to qualify to use certain animal raising claims;
- For those animal raising claims for which AMS has adopted standards, should FSIS adopt the AMS standards as the minimum standards;
- Would the approach outlined in this document create any inequities or problems for companies interested in using animal raising claims on the labels of their meat or poultry products; and
- What other approaches should FSIS consider for evaluating and approving animal raising claims?

The meeting will be held from 8:30 a.m. and adjourn at 12:30 p.m. It will be held at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. An agenda is available on FSIS' Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/meetings\\_&\\_events/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp).

## FSIS and Stakeholders to Discuss the Control of *E. coli* O157:H7: Addressing Sampling Methodologies and Compliance Guidelines

FSIS will host a public meeting on October 14 and 15 regarding control of *E. coli* O157:H7. This one-and-a-half day public meeting will address uniformity and consistency of sampling methodology for *E. coli* O157:H7, both by industry and FSIS.

FSIS will also address *E. coli* O157:H7 compliance guidelines and will also use the meeting to gather input from stakeholders on other *E. coli* O157:H7 control issues that need to be addressed which will be compiled into a list of discussion topics for future public meetings.

The meeting will be held from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. on October 14 and from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on October 15 at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. Audio hookup is available for those who need to call in to participate. An agenda is available for review at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/meetings\\_&\\_events/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp).