



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Volume 7, Issue 15
April 14, 2006



FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Reports 2005 Foodborne Illness Data

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report on April 14 titled, *Preliminary FoodNet Data on the Incidence of Infection with Pathogens Transmitted Commonly Through Food - 10 States, United States, 2005*. FoodNet collects data from 10 U.S. states regarding diseases caused by enteric pathogens transmitted commonly through food. This report describes preliminary surveillance data for 2005 and compares them with baseline data from the period 1996-1998.

In its annual report on the incidence of infections from foodborne pathogens, the CDC noted significant declines in 2005 from the 1996-1998 baseline in illnesses caused by *Yersinia* (49%), *Listeria* (32%), *Campylobacter* (30%), *E. coli* O157 (29%), and *Salmonella* (9%). Although *Salmonella* incidence decreased overall, of the five most common *Salmonella* serotypes, only the incidence of *S. Typhimurium* (42%) significantly decreased. The estimated incidence of *S. Enteritidis* increased 25% and *S. Heidelberg* increased 25%.

“The release of the 2005 data clearly shows that the reductions in human illness from foodborne pathogens witnessed during the past few years have been sustained. Healthy People 2010 national objectives are close to being met for *E. coli* O157, *Campylobacter* and *Listeria monocytogenes*,” stated Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond. “FSIS looks forward to continuing its collaboration with the CDC to find better ways to detect and prevent human illness from the foods we regulate.”

The report is available on CDC’s Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5514.pdf>.

Inside this Issue

CY 2005 Microbiological Data Released	2
Public Health Alert on Ground Meat Products	2
Updated Poultry Slaughter Guidance Materials	3
Revised List of Safe and Suitable Ingredients	3
Export Tip of the Week	4

Export Requirement Updates



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

Australia

European Union

People's Republic of China

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

FSIS Posts Calendar Year 2005 Microbiological Data on Web Site

Today, FSIS posted on its Web site calendar year (CY) 2005 microbiological data for *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw ground beef, *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) and *Salmonella* in ready-to-eat (RTE) products, and serotype data for *Salmonella* detected in raw meat and poultry products.

The data shows that in 2005, the percent of samples that tested positive for *E. coli* O157:H7 was 0.173 percent. This is relatively unchanged from 2004, when the percent was 0.175.

The objective of the microbiological testing program to detect *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw ground beef is to verify that

industry's HACCP systems are working.

The percentage of *Lm* positive test results for RTE products was 0.64 percent. This is a slight increase from 2004, when the percentage of positive test results was 0.55 percent.

The percentage of *Salmonella* positive test results for RTE products was 0.06 percent. This is a reduction from 0.08 percent in 2004.

The CY 2005 microbiological data is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Microbiology/index.asp>.

FSIS Reminds Consumers to Properly Handle and Cook Ground Beef Products

FSIS issued a public health alert on April 7, to remind consumers to ensure that meat products are fully cooked and properly handled before they are consumed.

FSIS has received reports of 14 illnesses caused by *E. coli* O157:H7 with matching microbiological profiles. There is no link to a specific product, but illnesses from this pathogen can be associated with consumption of raw or uncooked ground beef.

Over a six-month period from September 2005 through March 2006, illnesses have been found in California, Iowa, New York, Ohio, Michigan, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. FSIS is working closely with state and local health officials to determine the exposure that led to the illnesses.

To prevent foodborne illness, consumers should follow the four Fight BAC!™ guidelines to keep food safe: Clean - wash hands

Continued on page three

OPM Issues Qualification Standard for Veterinary Medical Officers

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) released on April 7, a revised version of the general schedule qualification standard for individuals applying for positions in the veterinary medical officer series.

This new standard will improve agencies' ability to recruit and hire people into this occupation. The standard replaces all previous versions for the 0701 occupational series.

This document is available on OPM's Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications>.

Public Alert on Ground Beef Products...

Continued from page two

and surfaces often; Separate - do not cross-contaminate; Cook - cook food to proper temperatures; and Chill - refrigerate food promptly.

Consumers with food safety questions can phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline line at 1-888-MPHOTLINE or 1-888-674-6854; TTY at 1-800-256-7072.

FSIS Updates Poultry Slaughter Guidance Materials

FSIS issued Notice 24-06 on April 12, to announce that two revised documents have been posted on FSIS' Web site.

Guidance for Determining Whether a Poultry Slaughter or Processing Operation is Exempt from Inspection Requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act, includes clarifications and corrects typographical errors. This document is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/Poultry_Slaughter_Exemption_0406.pdf.

Generic HACCP Model for Poultry Slaughter, HACCP-5, dated September 1999, incorrectly listed "fecal contamination from

gut breakage" as a physical hazard in the last row, second column of the "food safety hazard" section.

The phrase has been deleted and replaced with "none." Also, "Salmonella" was removed from the biological hazard row and replaced with "pathogens (fecal and ingesta contamination from gut breakage)" on the same page. This document is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/nis/outreach/models/HACCP-5.pdf>.

Notice 24-06 can be assessed on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/Notice_24-06/index.asp.

FSIS Revises List of Safe and Suitable Ingredients

FSIS amended Directive 7120.1 on April 10, to revise the list of safe and suitable ingredients for meat and poultry products.

This directive titled, *Safe and Suitable Ingredients Used in the Production of Meat and Poultry Products*, identifies the substances that have been approved in the *Code of Federal Regulations* for use in meat and poultry products as food additives, in generally recognized

Continued on page four

FSIS to Hold Public Meeting on Posting List of Retail Consignees

FSIS will hold a public meeting to solicit comments on its proposal to make available to the public lists of retail consignees of meat and poultry products that have voluntarily been recalled by a federally inspected meat or poultry establishment if product has been distributed to the retail level.

The public meeting will be held on April 24, from 9:30 a.m. to noon, in the conference room at the south end of the cafeteria in the USDA South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250.

To pre-register, contact Diane Jones at (202) 720-9692 or by electronic mail at Diane.Jones@fsis.usda.gov.

The agency is accepting comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by electronic mail at fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov.

Revised List of Ingredients ...

Continued from page three

as safe notices, pre-market notifications and in letters conveying acceptability determinations.

FSIS will continue to issue updates to the list as needed. For further policy information regarding the substances, contact FSIS' Labeling and Consumer Protection Staff at (202) 205-0279.

This directive is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/7120.1_Amend_7.pdf.

Export Tip of the Week

Recently, there have been additional cases where exporters diverted their product from the original country of destination to another country of destination. The country is generally, but not always, located in the surrounding area. This means that "replacement certificates" must be generated for the new country of destination and fewer documents may be required.

If an exporter requests new documents, inspectors must reconfirm that the product meets the new country's requirements before issuing the replacement certificates. If the product meets the requirements, the documents should be issued. If not, the documents should not be issued.

If the documents are issued and the product arrives at the new port of entry, there may be instances where additional clarification or certification is required. Exporters

should clear any additional requests with FSIS' Office of International Affairs (OIA) prior to approaching inspection officials for additional documentation.

Often, OIA can work with overseas USDA Embassy staff to get the product cleared without any additional documentation. However, inspection officials should be advised on how to proceed by OIA staff and should not take instructions from U.S. exporters. U.S. exporters should contact OIA on (202) 720-3473 for further guidance.

Visit FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp to learn more about requirements for exporting products to other countries.