



United States  
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Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

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# FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## FSIS Issues Notice on Retail and Home Food Handling and Preparations

FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice on July 7, titled, *Retail and Home Food Handling and Preparation Behaviors That May Lead to Cross-contamination by Bacterial Pathogens of Foods That Are Not Likely to Undergo Cooking or Additional Cooking*.

FSIS is requesting information on studies related to cross-contamination by foodborne pathogens of foods that are not likely to undergo cooking or additional cooking in food handling and preparation. Specifically, the agency is interested in quantitative data obtained by observation of retail establishments (commercial and institutional settings) and home food handlers.

The agency is requesting information on the types of food handling and preparation behaviors that could lead to the transfer of bacteria from products of animal origin to foods that are not likely to undergo cooking or additional cooking (e.g., salad components and ready-to-eat foods), as well as information on the frequency at which these behaviors occur. Information submitted in response to this request for information may be used in risk assessment modeling to estimate the public health impact of the presence of various foodborne pathogens in meat, poultry and egg products.

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](mailto:fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov).

The notice is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2006-0008.htm>.

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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

### European Union

### France

Complete information can be found at: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&Policies/Export\\_Information/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/Export_Information/index.asp).

## FSIS to Hold Public Meeting to Discuss the Updated Risk Assessment for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

FSIS will hold a technical meeting on July 25, to present and receive comments on an updated risk assessment for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

FSIS is also announcing the availability of an updated risk assessment model and report for BSE. The previous risk assessment, released in October 2003, was revised to incorporate information available through December 2003, including the discovery of a BSE-infected cow in Washington State.

The revised risk assessment model evaluates the impact of measures implemented after the discovery of the BSE-positive cow and recommendations made by an international BSE panel.

The public meeting will be held from 1 to 4 p.m., in the Jefferson Auditorium of the South Building of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, 20250.

The agency is accepting comments on the notice for the updated Harvard Risk Assessment through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by electronic mail at [fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov).

The notice is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2006-0011.htm>.

## FSIS Issues Notice on Inspection of Ox Tails

FSIS issued Notice 41-06 on July 12, titled, *Inspection of Ox Tails*.

This notice is being issued to reiterate to inspection program personnel that they are to inspect ox tails at all establishments where ox tails are processed. The notice also provides clarification on how inspection program personnel should perform the inspection of ox tails.

The notice, which is effective on July 26, is available on FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations\\_&\\_policies/Notice\\_41-06/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Notice_41-06/index.asp).

## Cooking Safely in Microwave Ovens

Microwave ovens can play an important role at mealtime, but special care must be taken when cooking or reheating meat, poultry, fish and eggs to make sure they are prepared safely.

To access safe microwaving tips, visit FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/Cooking\\_Safely\\_in\\_the\\_Microwave/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Cooking_Safely_in_the_Microwave/index.asp).

## Hot Links

**E-mail Subscription Service** - The email alert service provides automatic and customized access to selected food safety news and information. Visit [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/news\\_&events/Email\\_Subscription/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&events/Email_Subscription/index.asp) to sign up.



**Ask Karen** - FSIS' virtual representative can answer your questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Visit "Ask Karen" at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food\\_Safety\\_Education/Ask\\_Karen/index.asp#Question](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp#Question).

## FSIS Revises Public Health Alert for Frozen, Stuffed Raw Chicken Products

FSIS, in collaboration with the Minnesota Departments of Health and Agriculture, has recently investigated cases of salmonellosis associated with a class of frozen entrees that contain raw chicken.

These frozen, breaded, boneless chicken products that may also be stuffed or filled and appear browned are raw and must be cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165° F.

The agency first issued a public health alert about this product on July 3, and released additional information on July 11, to enable consumers to more readily identify this product and protect themselves against potential foodborne illness.

The news release is available at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/NR\\_070306\\_01/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_070306_01/index.asp).

## Salmonella Scheduling Criteria

This past February, FSIS announced a new risk-based approach for conducting verification activities associated with *Salmonella* control in plants producing all classes of raw products (<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/04-026N.pdf>).

To better protect public health and reduce exposure of the public to *Salmonella*, FSIS is redirecting its *Salmonella* Verification Sampling Program by allocating inspection and sampling resources at a greater frequency in plants that exhibit highly variable or variable process control.

This approach is intended also to cause a significant reduction in exposure of the public to serotypes of *Salmonella* associated with common human illness. To enhance transparency, FSIS is making its scheduling criteria available to both the public and regulated industry.

The following one-page document explains how FSIS has begun to schedule testing in plants that produce raw products for *Salmonella* sets based on hierarchical criterion. FSIS began using this scheduling process in June 2006.

To view the document, visit FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/pdf/scheduling\\_criteria\\_salmonella\\_sets.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/pdf/scheduling_criteria_salmonella_sets.pdf).

## Small and Very Small Plant Outreach



FSIS has assembled food safety resources designed

to assist small and very small plants in understanding and meeting regulatory requirements.

For more information about the small and very small plant outreach, visit FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Small\\_Very\\_Small\\_Plant\\_Outreach/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Small_Very_Small_Plant_Outreach/index.asp).

## Export Tip of the Week

Although Japan's market is currently closed to imports of U.S. beef, USDA is optimistic that certification of beef meat products will resume within the next few weeks. It is important when the market re-opens, inspectors certifying product destined for Japan should check the country requirements carefully.

Exporters also need to be vigilant in assuring that all products on the export application are eligible for export to Japan and that no ineligible product is included in the shipment, even inadvertently.

The country requirements are very specific regarding certification of product and include not only a copy of the letterhead certificate required but also instructions on how to complete the FSIS 9060-6, *Export Application*; FSIS 9060-5, *Meat and Poultry Export Certificate of Wholesomeness*; and FSIS Form 9290-1, *Certificate for Export to Japan*.

If you have any questions regarding certification of product to Japan, please call FSIS' Office of International Affairs at (202) 720-3473.

**To submit comments or questions,  
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