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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Releases FY 2008-2013 Strategic Plan

FSIS has recently completed the strategic planning process, which began with a review of the mission-critical USDA goals and objectives. It continued with a thorough review of FSIS and the development of goals and objectives that will help the agency better meet public health challenges.

The end result is *The FSIS FY 2008-2013 Strategic Plan*, which will guide the Agency’s activities over the next five years. The plan includes FSIS’ public health mission, vision, goals and the means and strategies for meeting those goals.

In the “Letter from the Administrator” section of the plan, FSIS Administrator Al Almanza states that the plan is the “foundation document for both the long range and the day-to-day operations of the Agency.”

During the coming weeks, FSIS will provide additional information on the plan and its components. Visit www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/Strategic_Planning/index.asp to review the agency’s mission, vision and future goals.

Constructive Dialogue Held on *E. coli*

FSIS held a public meeting on April 9 and 10 to discuss challenges and proposed solutions in moving forward to address recalls and illnesses related to *E. coli* O157:H7.

Control and Prevention, a senior foodborne illness litigation firm partner, representatives from industry and consumer groups, as well as a small plant owner and operator from South Carolina.

The meeting featured various presentations and panel discussions by FSIS officials, the U.S. Centers for Disease

“We need to discuss what your community – whether you’re a producer, processor, consumer, academic or public official – is

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Export Requirement Updates



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

European Union

Chile

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

April 16 Regulatory Web Seminar Offered for Small and Very Small Plants

FSIS will hold a regulatory Web seminar on April 16 to discuss methods that small and very small meat, poultry and processed egg product establishments can implement to ensure effective sanitation, thus provide safer products for consumers.

The seminar will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. and from 6 to 7 p.m. DST. To register by phone, call (800) 336-3747 or e-mail questions to netmeetingseminars@fsis.usda.gov.

Public Dialogue on *E. coli* ...

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going to do on this problem,” stated Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond. measures to lower the prevalence level of the bug.

Speakers from outside the Agency shared their perspectives on the causes of the recent uptick in *E. coli* O157:H7 at the pre-harvest and processing stages as well. In addition, they shared their views on how best to move forward.

Many, from the American Meat Institute’s Dr. Randall Huffman to Safe Tables Our Priority’s Donna Rosenbaum supported the notion of looking into, and implementing, more pre-harvest

The Agency will be accepting comments until May 7 and will move forward with proposed initiatives to lower the risk associated with *E. coli*, based on input provided.

To obtain copies of the powerpoints presented at the meeting, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/2008_Notices_Index/index.asp#Ecoli. In the coming weeks, a complete transcription of the meeting will be available on this site as well.

Register to Attend Regulatory Education Workshop in Missouri

FSIS will hold a regulatory education workshop in Missouri on April 16 that discuss 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 session will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 2 Convention Center Plaza, Saint Charles, Missouri.

To register by phone, 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.

FSIS Published Notice to Cancel Egg Products Memorandum

FSIS published Notice 24-08 - *Cancellation of Non-Fsis Letterhead Egg Products Memorandum and Notices, and Sections of Ams Py-Instruction No. 910* on April 9.

This FSIS notice advises inspection program personnel that non-FSIS letterhead egg products memorandum and notices issued previously to the egg products industry are obsolete.

To view this notice, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/24-08.pdf.

FSIS Provides Compliance Guidelines

This week FSIS posted new guidance material on its Web site.

- *Guidance on Meaning of “Prohibited Substances” in FSIS Actions on the Use of Ingredients in Meat and Poultry Products.*
- *Compliance Guide on the Determination of Processing Aids.*

To review these documents visit www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Compliance_Guides_Index/index.asp.

CDC Reports Little Change Recently in Foodborne Illness Rates

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released this week its annual report on the incidence of foodborne illness in FoodNet, a 10-state study area, showing little change in the 2007 rates compared to recent years (2004-2006).

FSIS participates with CDC, the Food and Drug Administration and state partners in the system, which conducts surveillance as well as studies about foodborne illness in the United States.

Much progress has been made in combating foodborne illness over the last 10 years, much of that accomplished before 2004. FSIS will use the comparison of 2007 to the recent period, along with other research, data and stakeholder input, in continuing to lower the risk to public health through regulatory programs and education for consumers, industry and FSIS personnel.

Illnesses associated with two *Salmonella* serotypes often associated with FSIS-regulated products – *Typhimurium* and *Heidelberg* – decreased in 2007 compared to the recent period. The illness rates from *E. coli* O157:H7 were slightly down from 2006.

The rate of illness caused by all *Salmonella* serotypes has not changed significantly since the baseline period (1996-1998). CDC noted outbreaks related to peanut butter, puffed vegetable snacks, frozen pot pies and pet turtles as contributing to the lack of progress for *salmonellosis* rates.

The data was published in the April 11 issue of the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. The complete report is available on the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5714a2.htm.

FSIS and NSF International to Food Safety Summit Postponed

The FSIS and NSF International Food Safety Summit originally scheduled for April 29, has been postponed.

The purpose of the summit is to provide a forum for medical, healthcare and public health professionals, as well as caregivers to engage in a meaningful information exchange about strategies for sharing safe food handling information with at-risk patients to reduce their risk of contracting a foodborne illness.

More information about the summit will be made available in future issues of the *FSIS Constituent Update*. Also be sure to check the Meetings and Event page of FSIS' Web site www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp.

Chile Approves Imports of U.S. Poultry

Secretary Ed Schafer this week announced that Chile's Livestock and Agricultural Service approved the U.S. inspection, control and certification systems for poultry, allowing these products to enter the Chilean market effective immediately.

"This agreement represents a strong foothold for U.S. poultry exports to South America," said Schafer.

Under this agreement, slaughterhouses, cold-storage plants, and processing facilities of poultry that are officially reported by FSIS will be incorporated into the list of commercial establishments approved for export.

Visit www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/PressRelease/pressrel_dout.asp?Entry=valid&PrNum=0067-08 to view the related press release.

FSIS to Host Two Day Public Health and Food Safety Summit

FSIS is committed to partnering with other food safety and public health communities in an effort to make critical improvements in public health and food safety.

FSIS is co-sponsoring a two day summit with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration titled: *Better Communications, Better Public Health Outcomes: Strategies for Improved Coordination During Foodborne Outbreaks*, scheduled for May 15 and 16.

The meeting will be held at the Renaissance St. Louis Grand and Suites Hotel, 800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

The summit will include a public meeting and an invitation-only simulation exercise. The steering committee will include representation from member organizations of the Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR), as well as other stakeholders.

CIFOR is a multidisciplinary working group whose mission is to increase collaboration across the country to reduce the burden of foodborne illness in the United States. As a member, FSIS recognizes the excellent and important work already being done by CIFOR and plans to continue active participation in future efforts.

More information about the summit, 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.