



FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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After Katrina: What USDA and FSIS are Doing

Hundreds of thousands of lives across the Gulf Coast region have been disrupted by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. In response to this tragedy, USDA has earmarked \$50 million dollars to provide emergency food assistance to Hurricane Katrina survivors. The Department is increasing the level of assistance to food stamp recipients, as well as those survivors who have not previously participated in the program. The USDA is also ensuring that schools are able to provide free lunches to students who have been relocated because of the hurricane.

assist the Federal Emergency Management Agency. In addition, the Forest Service has devoted aircraft to facilitate the airlift of 325 New York City Fire Department personnel to support the City of New Orleans.

- **Food Assistance** - USDA has delivered, or has on the way, more than 300 trucks containing over 12 million pounds of food (canned vegetables, fruits, cheese and meats) and baby food and formula products, with truckloads of additional supplies being prepared for delivery to affected communities.

USDA has dedicated the following resources to relief:

- **Personnel Deployed** - The Department has deployed 2,760 Forest Service employees who are trained in rescue and response to large-scale incidents to

FSIS is working to redeploy resources to Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana to identify, control and properly dispose of any adulterated meat, poultry and egg products.

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Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated for the following:

European Union

Mexico

Singapore

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

What USDA and FSIS Are Doing...

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FSIS' Technical Service Center and the Meat and Poultry Hotline are temporarily offering customer service 24 hours a day for industry and consumers to meet the needs of the impacted region. The Agency is diverting the USDA Food Safety Mobile from its previously scheduled visits in September to the affected areas so that FSIS can provide as much firsthand food safety education and assistance to prevent any outbreaks of foodborne illness.

FSIS also is providing food safety recommendations through a

consumer alert titled "*Food Safety: Power Outages and Flooding.*" FSIS strongly recommends to all of its food safety partners to pass along this alert and bookmark www.fsis.usda.gov for the latest updates and recommendations on how to keep food safe during power outages and flooding.

Additional information and updates about USDA's hurricane relief effort are at: www.usda.gov.

Food Safety Institute of the Americas to Hold Public Meeting

FSIS is holding a public meeting to discuss the Food Safety Institute of the Americas' (FSIA) goal of improving and harmonizing food safety, food security and food defense education, training and communication throughout the Americas. The meeting will take place September. 29-30, 2005, in Miami, Fla.

Attendees will be encouraged to make suggestions on the scope and direction of the FSIA during interactive plenary sessions.

Issues to be discussed include:

- An assessment and analysis of educational and informational needs identified through a survey administered by FSIA partners, the University of Florida and Miami Dade College;
- FSIA's three to five year strategic plan;
- The establishment of strategies and best practices for developing and delivering programs identified through the needs survey; and

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This Week's Hot Web Links

FSIS Food Safety Education

www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education

FSIS Food Security and Emergency Preparedness

www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Security_&_Emergency_Preparedness/

FSIS Emergency Preparedness Fact Sheets

www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Emergency_Preparedness_Fact_Sheets/

- Planning next steps for the FSIA in fostering collaboration and partnership development of the proposed FSIA colleges.

The Institute is seeking to tap into existing networks of domestic and international government, academia, industry and consumer organizations within North, South and Central America and the Caribbean. The Institute will utilize these networks to further develop international food safety, food security and food defense standards and improve public health in the western hemisphere.

FSIS invites all interested persons to take part in, and submit, comments on the topics to be discussed at the public meeting. Comments may be submitted by mail to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, FSIS, 300 12th Street, SW., Room 102 Cotton Annex, Washington, DC 20250-3700. Submissions must include the agency name and docket number 05-028N. To comment online, go to: www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations/2005_notices_index.

The meeting will be held at the Renaissance Eden Roc Hotel, 4525 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. September 29; and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on September 30. All sessions are free, but registration is required. Attendees who need sign language interpreters or have other special needs should contact the FSIA at (305) 347-5552 or by fax (305) 530-6066. The meeting agenda will be available prior to the meeting at: www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Meetings_&_Events.

National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods to Hold Public Meeting

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods will hold a public meeting of the full committee on September 28, 2005 from 8:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Omni Colonnade Hotel, 180 Aragon Avenue, Coral Gables, Fla. 33134.

The Committee will discuss:

- The analytical utility of Campylobacter methodologies;
- The determination of cooking parameters for safe seafood for consumers; and

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Food Safety and Flooding

FSIS is providing recommendations in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which has caused widespread flooding and power outages in Gulf Coast states. The following are tips on what food items you should discard and save in a flood emergency:

Discard:

Canned foods, including those bought in stores as well as home-canned foods.

All foods in cardboard boxes, paper, foil, cellophane or cloth should be thrown out.

Meat, poultry, eggs or fish.

Spices, seasonings, extracts, flour, sugar, grain, coffee and other staples in canisters.

Unopened jars with waxed cardboard seals such as mayonnaise and salad dressing. Also throw away preserves sealed with paraffin.

Wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers.

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- Consumer guidelines for the safe cooking of poultry products.

In addition to the plenary session, Subcommittees also will hold meetings that are open to the public on September 26-29, 2005, at the Omni Colonnade Hotel. The Subcommittee on Consumer Guidelines for the Safe Cooking of Poultry Products will meet September 26, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and on September 27, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Subcommittee on Determination of Cooking Parameters for Safe Seafood for Consumers will meet September 28, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and on September 29, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For further information contact Karen Thomas, FSIS, Office of Public Health Science, Microbiology Division, Aerospace Center, Room 333, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-3700; phone (202) 690-6620; fax (202) 690-6334, or email karen.thomas@fsis.usda.gov. For additional meeting information, contact Karen Thomas, advisory committee specialist, at (202) 690-6620. To access the agenda visit: http://199.140.65.44:83/News_&_Events/agenda_nacmcf_jul05/. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify Ms. Thomas by September 19, 2005.

FSIS to Allow Use of Small Intestine from United States and Eligible Countries

FSIS published an amendment earlier this week to the interim final rule "Prohibition on the Use of Specified Risk Materials for Human Food." The new amendment continues to prohibit the distal ileum, a specified risk material (SRM), for use as human food but allows use of the remainder of the beef small intestine from cattle that are slaughtered in the United States or in a foreign establishment eligible to export such products. The U.S.

Food and Drug Administration published a similar amendment this week to the small intestine provisions of its interim final rule on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

FSIS has determined that the portion of the small intestine traditionally used as food, or as a casing for specialty sausage, can be safely and effectively separated from the section that contains the distal ileum. The

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Save:

Canned foods that did not come into contact with flood waters.

Any metal pans, ceramic dishes and utensils that came in contact with flood water that has been washed with hot soapy water and sanitized by boiling in clean water or by immersing for 15 minutes in a solution of one teaspoon of chlorine bleach per quart of water.

And always remember that:
When in doubt, throw it out.

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distal ileum, but not the remainder of the small intestine, was one of the tissues of cattle that FSIS classified as a SRM associated with BSE in January 2004. In the January 2004, interim final rule, FSIS asked for comments on procedures for effectively separating the small intestine from the distal ileum.

Through examination of research, FSIS determined that effective distal ileum removal provides the same level of protection from human exposure to BSE infection, as does the exclusion of the entire small intestine from the human food supply. Establishments would have to demonstrate they have written procedures for removing the distal ileum and that these procedures are part of its Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point system, Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures or other prerequisite programs. FSIS has concluded that procedures requiring the removal of at least 80 inches of uncoiled and trimmed small intestine as measured from the juncture of the ileum and the cecum would comply with this requirement.

The amendment to the interim final rule is consistent with guidance related to BSE provided

by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) in its 2005 Terrestrial Animal Health Code. The OIE is a chartered organization within the World Health Organization.

Under the amendment, U.S. producers and all certified establishments in foreign countries would be allowed to manufacture the small intestine for human food. Sausage manufacturers who intend to use the small intestine as casing material would need to provide FSIS with documentation that the casing was effectively removed from the distal ileum. The regulation goes into effect October 7 in order to provide time for FSIS inspection program personnel to receive training on how to verify provisions of the regulation.

Written comments on the technical amendments must be received by November 7, and they should be submitted to the FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #03-025IF, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700. Comments also will be posted at: www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/2005/Proposed_Rules_Index/.

How to Contact the *Constituent Update*

If you would like to submit comments or ask questions concerning the Constituent Update you may contact the editor, Crystal Straughn via E-mail at: fsisupdate@fsis.usda.gov, or by phone at (202) 720-9113

Russia Will Not Restrict Poultry Exports From States Affected By Hurricane

Quick action by FSIS' Office of International Affairs (OIA) has helped to prevent any disruption in U.S. poultry trade with Russia.

Last week, OIA was contacted by Russia's Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Control Service regarding the impact of Hurricane Katrina on poultry processing and storage facilities in Louisiana, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi.

OIA's letter in response assured Russia that all special requirements previously agreed upon would be met before any facility would be allowed to ship product to Russia.

"The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is monitoring affected establishments as they made repairs to ensure that establishments will continue to be able to comply with FSIS and Russian requirements," the letter stated. "When these establishments are ready to export, FSIS will begin certification in accordance with the terms of the agreement. As you might imagine, this will be a gradual process as the time that will be needed to repair facilities has yet to be determined. In the meantime, please be assured that FSIS will not issue certification for exports to Russia from these establishments until they have completed all necessary repairs."

Following receipt of the letter, Sergei Dankvert, chief of the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Control Service, said Russia was satisfied presently with the assurances contained in the letter.

"At present, we have received additional guarantees from the U.S. veterinary service about the quality of all poultry imports from the regions that were exposed to the strike of the disaster," Dankvert said.

Dankvert stressed that "Russian veterinarians are going to watch most carefully the situation south of the U.S., whose infrastructure has seriously suffered from the unprecedented hurricane."

States affected by Hurricane Katrina accounted for approximately 10 percent of the poultry produced in the U.S. but fully one-third of all poultry exports to Russia. Russia imported 320,000 tons of chicken quarters from the U.S. in the first half of 2005, a 14 percent increase compared to 2004.