



United States
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Inspection Service

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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Welcomes Beth Johnson as Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety

This week, USDA Secretary Ed Schafer welcomed the designation of Elizabeth (Beth) Johnson as Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety.

A native of Madison, Indiana, Johnson holds a Master of Science degree in Nutrition from the University of Maryland and a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics from Ball State University.

Johnson has most recently served as Chief Assistant to Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner and Deputy Chief of Staff since May 2005.

A registered dietitian, Johnson joined USDA in 2002, having served more than a decade advising government and the private sector on the subjects of nutrition, farm credit and livestock. Her previous government experience includes positions at the Food and Drug Administration as a nutritionist for the food labeling division and as a research dietitian at the USDA Agricultural Research Service.

The designation is pending the October 1 retirement from federal service of Dr. Richard A. Raymond who has been responsible for overseeing the policies and programs of FSIS since July 2005.

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Export Requirement Updates



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

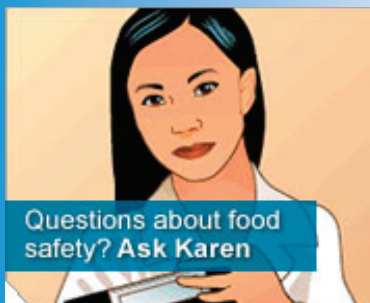
Canada

Chile

Hong Kong

Japan

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



AskKaren.gov

FSIS Updates *E. coli* O157:H7 Reports

FSIS has updated *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) O157:H7 testing data to include information through September 23, 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 23, 2007			As of September 21, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	8,835	17	0.19	8,362	32	0.38
Retail Stores	128	0	0.00	288	0	0.00
Imports	61	0	0.00	38	1	2.63
Raw Ground Beef Components						
Source	As of September 23, 2007			As of September 21, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	438	2	0.46	1,591	11	0.69
Imports	0	0	0.00	397	2	0.50
The above information is based upon data in the FSIS electronic data system as of September 23, 2008. Results are from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs.						

On September 28, 2007, FSIS issued Notice 62-07 titled *Instructions for Verification Sampling Programs for E. Coli O157:H7 in Raw Beef Products*. In this notice, field personnel were instructed to collect samples and submit them to FSIS for testing without waiting for an establishment to complete its pre-shipment review.

Prior to this document, FSIS personnel were to hold samples until the establishment completed its pre-shipment review. Some of the collected samples were not sent to the lab for testing because the product was diverted to cooking. With the issuance of Notice 62-07, these samples are now being analyzed by FSIS.

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.

Review New Podcasts for September

This month, FSIS released new podcasts helpful to plant operators and owners.



- September 3 - *Designing a HACCP Plan – Part 8*

Learn about the sixth HACCP principle – Establishing record keeping procedures.

- September 10 - *Designing a HACCP Plan - Part 9*

Learn about the seventh HACCP principle – Establishing verification procedures.

- September 17 – *Designing a HACCP Plan – Part 10*

Find out about the common pitfalls when designing a HACCP plan, how to overcome them and sources for more information.

- September 24 – *What Is Avian Influenza and How Is FSIS Preparing for It?*

Learn about *Avian Influenza* and what FSIS is doing to prepare for an outbreak within the United States.

Check out these new podcasts on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Food_Safety_Inspection_Podcasts/index.asp.

USDA to Host Public Meeting on 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 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 will be available for review on FSIS' Web site at 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 at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. An agenda is forthcoming and will be available soon at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp.



FSIS Issues Notices Regarding Sampling and Testing Instructions

FSIS issued the following notices this week.

- Notice 63-08 titled *Further Sampling Instructions Regarding FSIS Notice 18-07*;
- Notice 65-08 titled *Use of FedEx Stamp for Shipping Samples to the Appropriate Laboratory*; and
- Notice 66-08 titled *Raw Product Destined For Ready-To-Eat Product Excluded From Salmonella Testing*.

CLEAN: Wash hands and surfaces often. Because bacteria are everywhere, cleanliness is a major factor in preventing foodborne illness.

SEPARATE: Don't cross-contaminate. Separate raw, cooked and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing or storing. Never place cooked food on a plate which previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood.

COOK: Cook food to proper temperatures. Use a food thermometer to be sure!

CHILL: Refrigerate promptly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours or sooner.

Learn more about basic food safety principles by visiting FSIS' facts sheets at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/index.asp.

Visit www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp to review these notices in detail.

FSIS Posts a Compliance Guideline for State Cooperative Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs

The Agency has posted a compliance guideline for State Cooperative Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs. This document was written to clarify standards that FSIS uses in its annual review.

Specifically, the compliance guideline focuses on nine components that determine whether MPIs are operating in a manner that is "at least equal to" the Federal inspection programs.

FSIS is requesting comments on the document and will consider any suggestions or comments received during the 30-day comment period. If appropriate, the Agency will revise the document based on the comments received. To review this compliance guideline, visit FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/At_Least_Equal_to_Guidelines.pdf.

Comments are to be submitted on or before October 27. Stakeholders are encouraged to submit their comments to the Office of Policy and Program Development, Policy Issuances Division at FSISGuidanceDocumentComments@fsis.usda.gov. All submissions will be posted to the Agency's Web site.