



United States  
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# FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## FSIS to Hold Public Meeting on Risk-Based Inspection

FSIS will hold a public meeting on April 2 to discuss the algorithm used to compute risk-based inspection levels for processing establishments. The meeting will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. at the George Mason University, Arlington Campus, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, Va. 22030.

The George Mason University campus is located near the

Virginia Square Metro Station on Metro's Orange Line for participants attending in person. In addition, the agency is planning to establish an audio conference for participants outside of the Washington, D.C. area.

An agenda for the meeting is being finalized and will soon post on FSIS' Web site, <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>, along with audio conference information.

## Register to Attend Regulatory Education Sessions in Pennsylvania and Alabama

FSIS will hold regulatory education sessions on March 20 and 21 for the owners and operators of small and very small plants in Pennsylvania and Alabama.

The sessions will cover a regulatory walk-through of sanitation standard operating procedures and the hazard analysis and critical control point and rules of practice regulations.

The regulatory education sessions will be held at the following locations:

• Tuesday, March 20, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the Crowne Plaza Harrisburg, 23 S. Second Street, Harrisburg, Pa.; and

• Wednesday, March 21, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the Doubletree Birmingham, 808 South 20th Street, Birmingham, Ala.

Online registration forms and information about upcoming sessions can be found at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Outreach\\_Sessions\\_SVS\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp).

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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**

**Egypt**

**European Union**

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).

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## What They're Saying About Risk-Based Inspection in Processing Plants

To learn more about what constituents are saying about risk-based inspection in processing plants, visit FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/NR\\_030907\\_01/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_030907_01/index.asp).

## TSC Expands Correlation Program

The role and purpose of the Technical Service Center (TSC) has evolved over the last 10 years. Initially, the TSC, as part of the Office of Field Operations (OFO), provided technical assistance, review of international and domestic establishments, correlation, training, international functions and information technology.

Many of these functions have since been split away from the TSC. The TSC is now part of the Office of Policy, Program and Employee Development (OPPED) and has begun, based on input from internal and external customers, to address stakeholder issues and improve how it contributes to the agency's public health mission, as well as how it provides stakeholder support.

A key new role of the TSC is to lead the development of policy and then, informed by the insights it has gained, to communicate that policy to inspection program personnel, the regulated industry, states and others who need to fully understand new policies. In addition, the TSC will actively use the "CAR" methodology whereby it will:

- a) **C**ollect information with which to identify problems in program implementation,
- b) **A**ssess the information collected, and

c) **R**espond by identifying and developing solutions to the problems and then appropriately communicating them to customers.

Although correlations that were previously conducted by the TSC involved simply reiterating policy that had been developed elsewhere in OPPED, the TSC has made a fundamental change in how correlations are conducted.

Now, the TSC will lead teams of FSIS personnel who are responsible for developing policy, and the correlations will be conducted by one or more members of the policy development team, including other FSIS staff from within and outside OPPED along with the TSC.

By having the policy development team engaged in articulating the most relevant policy considerations via the correlations, and by having the TSC coordinate these correlations, correlations will be more substantive and informed.

Part of implementing the new TSC role is to expand its correlation program to a total of three correlations per week. Previously, there was one per week and it was internal to the TSC. These correlations will serve OPPED staffs as well as the field and headquarters staff of the other program areas, particularly

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## **Corned Beef and Food Safety**

The approach of spring usually means that St. Patrick's Day dinner preparations across the country will spark many questions about the safe handling, storage and preparation of corned beef and all the trimmings. But food safety involves more than the "luck of the Irish."

Corned beef is made from one of several less tender cuts of beef like the brisket, rump or round. Therefore, it requires long, moist cooking. Keep food safety in mind when preparing corned beef. It can be cooked on top of the stove or in the oven, microwave or slow cooker.

Corned beef may still be pink in color after cooking. This does not mean it is not done. Nitrite is used in the curing process. This fixes pigment in the meat and affects the color.

Allow the brisket to stand for about 10 minutes after removing from the heat. This will make it easier to slice, and it is best sliced diagonally across the grain of the meat.

For additional information regarding corned beef and food safety, go to [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/Corned\\_Beef/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Corned_Beef/index.asp).

## ***TSC Correlations ...***

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the OFO district offices.

The three weekly correlations will:

- 1) contribute to the consistent and uniform application and interpretation of regulations and policies for all of OPPED;
- 2) proactively identify potential questions and concerns with draft issuances just before the documents are issued; and
- 3) provide OFO district managers with an opportunity, soon after a notice, directive or compliance guideline is issued, to discuss and ask questions on them.

The three weekly correlations are:

### **• *The "Pre- Issuances Correlation"***

In this correlation, the take-home message from draft directives, notices, compliance guidelines, etc. that have cleared headquarters and are ready to be issued will be presented.

This correlation gives TSC staff officers an opportunity to ask questions that are anticipated from the field and others, as well as clarifying policy specifics in the issuances, before they are issued to the field.

All OPPED staffs including the Center for Learning (CFL), other

program areas located in Omaha, Neb., and the TSC participate.

### **• *The "TSC Correlation"***

In this correlation, topics that are presented include questions and answers on technical issues arising from e-mails or telephone calls, notices and directives, and special topic presentations from groups outside FSIS (e.g. academia, industry and new technology manufacturers).

All OPPED staffs, including the CFL, other programs located in Omaha, and the TSC participate.

### **• *The "District Correlation on New Issuances/Other Policy"***

This is a district correlation on newly issued notices, directives, compliance guidelines, etc., that occurs each week that new issuances are available. In this correlation, the take-home message from recently issued directives, notices, compliance guidelines, etc. are presented.

This correlation gives districts an opportunity to ask questions soon after issuance to clarify policy specifics in the issuances or other policy concerns.

Once a month, the district correlation will be used to discuss topics requested by the districts or to give general updates on policy. Participation is for staff

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**Keep Hands**

**Clean!**

**with Good Hygiene**

Cleanliness is a major factor in preventing foodborne illness.

Wash hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds:

- before and after handling food;
- after using the bathroom;
- after changing a diaper;
- after handling pets;
- after tending to a sick person;
- after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing; and
- after handling uncooked eggs or raw meat, poultry or fish and their juices;

For more information, contact the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline. Food safety experts are available year-round Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern Time to answer questions about safely preparing and cooking foods. The toll-free number is 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). Recorded messages are available 24 hours a day.



## ***TSC Correlations ...***

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officers representing OFO district offices and the management of TSC and other OPPED staffs. [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About\\_Fsis/Technical\\_Service\\_Center/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_Fsis/Technical_Service_Center/index.asp).

For additional information about the TSC, visit FSIS' Web site at

**To submit comments or questions,  
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