



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Volume 8, Issue 46
November 16, 2007



FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Posts Guide of Federal Food Labeling Requirements for Meat and Poultry Products

FSIS has posted on its Web site a manual titled, “*A Guide to Federal Food Labeling Requirements for Meat and Poultry Products.*”

identify and understand the requirements that shape the food labels that manufacturers design for consumers.

The manual is designed to be an easy-to-follow guide to assist manufacturers, consumers and FSIS personnel on the regulatory requirements and policies for labeling products. While this document is not a substitute for an in-depth understanding of legal and regulatory labeling requirements, which are referenced throughout the manual, the guide provides the reader with a useful tool to

The manual can be assessed on FSIS’ Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Basics_of_Labeling/index.asp.

Questions regarding the manual should be directed to FSIS’ Labeling and Program Delivery Division at 202-205-0623, or by using the agency’s Web-based feature *askFSIS* at askfsis.custhelp.com.

FSIS Posts Third Quarterly Report on Salmonella Testing

FSIS posted to its Web site on Nov. 16 the third quarterly progress report on *Salmonella* testing of selected raw meat and poultry products. This report provides preliminary data for the months July - September 2007.

In February 2006, FSIS posted in the *Federal Register* its intention to publish results quarterly and to change how it used the results from its *Salmonella* verification sampling program for meat and poultry

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Export Requirement Updates



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

Russia

Singapore

Uruguay

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

Kitchen Thermometers

It is essential to use a food thermometer when cooking meat, poultry and egg products to prevent undercooking, verify that food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature and consequently, prevent foodborne illness.



To learn more about kitchen thermometers, visit FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Kitchen_Thermometers/index.asp.

Salmonella Testing ...

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establishments as a way to enhance public health protection.

FSIS is now providing results from individual *Salmonella* verification sample tests the agency regularly conducts at meat and poultry establishments to establishments that have asked to be informed of various tests.

Highlights from the report include:

- Using the agency's new trend indicator, 84 percent of turkey slaughter establishments are now Category 1, up from 73 percent for the previous quarter. The other 16 percent are in Category 2.
- For broilers, market hogs and cows/bulls, the percentages in Category 1 are all up by small amounts (1.0 percent for broilers, 3.0 percent for market hogs and 2.0 percent for cows/bulls).

The quarterly report is available on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Data_Collection_&_Reports/index.asp.

FSIS to Hold *E.coli* Outreach Workshops for Small and Very Small Plants

As part of the agency's initiative to enhance outreach to small and very small plants, FSIS is hosting a series of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) outreach workshops on Nov. 28, in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Missouri.

The workshops will cover prerequisite programs and FSIS Notices 65-07, 66-07 and 68-07. The *E. coli* outreach workshops will be held from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the following locations:

- Holiday Inn and Suites, 2785 Ramada Way, Green Bay, Wis.;

- Holiday Inn Historic District, 400 Arch St. Philadelphia, Pa.; and
- Hyatt Regency St. Louis, One St. Louis Union Station, St. Louis, Mo.

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.

Helpful Resources



FSIS' virtual representative **Ask Karen** is available to provide food safety information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.askkaren.gov.

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline - Food safety experts are available year-round from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time to answer questions about safely preparing and cooking foods.

The hotline will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Eastern time on Thanksgiving Day. The toll-free number is 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). Recorded messages are available 24 hours a day.

Agency Offers Food Safety Tips for Thanksgiving Holiday

This week, FSIS issued a news release to provide consumers with recommendations on how to safely prepare a thanksgiving meal.

When deciding to purchase a frozen turkey, it's important to safely thaw the turkey in the refrigerator, in cold water or in a microwave oven.

In the refrigerator, allow approximately 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds. To thaw in cold water, allow approximately 30 minutes per pound. If a microwave oven is used, check the owner's manual to calculate minutes per pound and appropriate power settings; cook immediately after thawing.

No matter what size turkey is purchased or what dish is prepared, it is important that consumers heed the recommendations of the USDA's nationwide campaign, *Be Food Safe*.

When handling and cooking a turkey, put "**Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill**" into practice in order to help prevent foodborne illness.

Clean: Always wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before and after handling food. Wash cutting boards, utensils, preparation surfaces and anything else that comes in contact with raw turkey and its juices with soap and hot water.



Separate: Use different cutting boards for raw meat or poultry and other foods that will not be cooked such as vegetables. Be sure to keep the raw turkey separate from the other side dishes.

Cook: Use a food thermometer. Every part of the turkey and the center of the stuffing should reach a safe minimum internal temperature of 165° F.

Chill: Keep the fridge at 40°F or below to keep bacteria from growing. Perishable foods should not be left sitting out at room temperature longer than two hours. Discard food which has been left at room temperature longer than two hours.

For additional information on safely preparing turkey for Thanksgiving dinner, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Lets_Talk_Turkey/index.asp.