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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Official Dr. Karen Hulebak Elected Chair of Codex Alimentarius Commission

USDA’s Secretary Ed Schafer announced July 2 that Dr. Karen Hulebak, a chief scientist for FSIS, has been elected to serve a two-year term as Chair of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) - The International Food Standards Organization.

The announcement was made on July 1, in Geneva, Switzerland, during the 31st Session of the CAC being convened there.

“We are pleased that Dr. Hulebak was elected to this important position,” said Secretary Schafer. “With a distinguished career in food science, food safety and a long association with Codex, I cannot think of a better choice to lead the organization.”

Prior to her election as Chair, Hulebak served as the organization’s Vice Chair and Chair of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. In both positions,

she gained tremendous respect for her inclusive approach and ability to build consensus throughout the world on important food standard issues.

“Dr. Hulebak’s inclusive approach to leadership, coupled with an outstanding background in food safety, makes her an excellent choice and an excellent leader for Codex,” said USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond. “I have the great pleasure of working with Dr. Hulebak on Codex issues and I am certain that under her leadership, the Commission will continue its commitment to science-based decision-making and standard-setting.”

To view the related press release, visit www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2008/07/0175.xml.

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Export Requirement Updates



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

Japan

Philippines

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

Results of *E. coli* O157:H7 testing by FSIS has been updated to include data through June 29, 2008.

The table below reports year-to-date information for the current year and one year prior for raw ground beef and raw ground beef components in federal plants, retail stores as well as imports.

Results from Analysis of Raw Ground Beef and Raw Ground Beef Component Samples for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7

Raw Ground Beef						
Source	As of July 1, 2007			As of June 29, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	5,825	13	0.22	5,957	15	0.25
Retail Stores	99	0	0.00	231	0	0.00
Raw Ground Beef Components						
Source	As of July 1, 2007			As of June 29, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	207	2	0.97	907	2	0.22
Imports	0	0	0.00	273	0	0.00
The above information is based upon data in the FSIS electronic data system as of July 1, 2008.						

The number of CY08 positive results (as of June 29) remains at 15, the same number as in last week's report. This means that no new positives have occurred since the last update.

Individual positive results for 2008 are reported on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/2008_Ecoli_Positive_Results/index.asp.

FSIS Issues Notices and Directives

FSIS issues notices and directives to enhance the agency's efforts in protecting public health.

Last week, the Agency issued a change transmittal on June 26, extending Notice 39-07 - *Certifying Beef Exports to Korea* until July 1, 2009. In addition the following notices and directives were recently issued:

- Notice 43-08 - *FSIS CNS Type Tissue Sample Verification Instructions for Raw Beef Produced Using Advanced Meat Recovery Systems*;
- Directive 5420.3, Revision 5 - *Homeland Security Threat Condition Response Surveillance of Establishments and Products in Commerce*;

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Food Defense Plans



FSIS will conduct a survey on August 1 to determine how many FSIS-regulated slaughter and processing plants have voluntarily adopted functional food defense plans.

A documented set of procedures will improve an establishment's ability to respond quickly. A food defense plan also helps to maintain a safe working environment for employees, provide a quality product to customers, and be particularly helpful during emergencies.



Also be sure to visit www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Defense_&_Emergency_Response/Guidance_Materials/index.asp to review guidelines for completing a functional food defense plan.

FSIS Notices and Directives...

Continued from page two

- Directive 8010.1, Revision 2 - *Methodology for Conducting In Commerce Surveillance Activities*;
 - Directive 8010.2, Revision 2 - *Investigative Methodology*;
 - Directive 8010.3, Revision 2 - *Procedures for Evidence Collection, Safeguarding and Disposal*;
 - Directive 8010.4, Revision 2 - *Report of Investigation*; and
 - Directive 8010.5, Revision 2 - *Case Referral and Disposition*
- Notices and directives are available on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp.

Register for Regulatory Education Workshop in Raleigh

FSIS will hold a regulatory education workshop for owners and operators of small and very small plants in Raleigh on July 15 as part of the Agency's outreach to these establishments.

The workshop will cover 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 July 15 session will be held at the Holiday Inn Crabtree Valley, 4100 Glenwood Avenue, Raleigh, North Carolina from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

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.

Handling Food Safely on the Road

V-A-C-A-T-I-O-N! Oh, how we long for that eight letter word every summer, when millions of us eagerly get away from school and work.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's nationwide, toll-free Meat and Poultry Hotline reminds everyone that some simple, common-sense food safety rules can save a vacation from disaster.

Following this advice could make the difference between a vacation to remember and one that is remembered because people got sick from improperly handled food.



FSIS offers some general rules while traveling this summer. Check them out at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Handling_Food_Safely_on_the_Road/index.asp.



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

NACMCF Subcommittee to Hold Public Meetings

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) "Subcommittee on Determination of the Most Appropriate Technologies for FSIS to Adopt in Performing Routine and Baseline Microbiological Analyses" will hold public meetings from July 28 through July 30.

The purpose of this meeting is to continue to discuss and develop guidance and recommendations for FSIS to consider on improving laboratory and in-plant testing methods for pathogens and indicator organisms.

This project will also assist the Agency with its goal; moving into the next generation of microbiological testing methods and focus on exploring the utility of new technologies.

The meetings will be held on Monday, July 28 from 12:00pm to 5:00pm, Tuesday, July 29 from 8:30am to 5:00pm, and Wednesday, July 30 from 8:30am to 12:00pm at the Aerospace Building, 901 D Street S.W., Room 369, Washington, D.C.

A summary report of the subcommittee meeting will be posted on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/About_Fsis/NACMCF_Subcommittee_Meetings/index.asp.

If you would like to attend these meetings please contact Karen Thomas-Sharp by phone at (202) 690-6620 or by email at karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov. All persons must RSVP in advance.

Got Food Safety Questions?

Ask Karen **MPHotline**

Visit "Ask Karen" at www.fsis.usda.gov. Click on "I Want To ... Ask A Food Safety Question"

Call the **USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline: 1-888-MPHOTLINE**
(1-888-674-6854)