FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection Holds Public Meeting on Risk-Based Inspection

The National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) held a public meeting from May 23-24, in Washington D.C., to discuss issues related to the further development of a more robust risk-based inspection system.

NACMPI subcommittees discussed measuring establishment risk control for risk-based inspection and a strategic implementation plan for enhancing outreach to small and very small plants. The meeting of the subcommittees was held on May 23, with the full committee meeting on both days.

Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond delivered opening remarks. "We've been working with industry and consumers monthly to develop the FSIS/State implementation plan for small and very small plant outreach," said Raymond. He also stated, "We need guidance from the committee on how to most meaningfully measure risks in FSIS-inspected establishments."

FSIS Administrator Dr. Barbara Masters also addressed the committee. "The NACMPI's work and recommendations are vital to our efforts to make FSIS a successful public health regulatory agency, and above all - to protect consumers."

A copy of the agenda and supplementary information will be available prior to the meeting on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/NACMPI/index.asp.

Inside this Issue

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

Egypt

European Union

Guatemala

Italy

Ireland

Romania

United Kingdom

Complete information can be found at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Export_Information/index.asp.

FSIS Posts Second Update on Compliance Guidelines and Questions and Answers for *Listeria* Rule

The second update of the document compliance guidelines and the questions and answers for the *Listeria* rule are now available on FSIS' Web site.

The original documents were posted on the Web site in June 2003, and the first update followed in October 2004.

The updated guidelines include documents resulting from Phase 1 activities of the Risk-Based Verification Program for the rule, such as a copy of the *Procedures for the Evaluation of Establishment Control Programs for Listeria monocytogenes*, better known as "the checklist,"

and the *Guidance Derived from a Review of Comprehensive Food Safety Assessments*.

The updated guidelines also include links to guidance documents for validation of control programs. The updated questions and answers include a new section on ready-to-eat post-lethality exposed products and page numbers for each section.

The updated documents are available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Compliance_Guides_Index/index.asp.

FSIS Issues Notice on Revised FSIS Form 9450-4, Veterinary Certificate for Export of Poultry Meat to the Russian Federation

FSIS issued Notice 29-06 on May 24, titled, *Revised FSIS Form 9450-4, Veterinary Certificate for Export of Poultry Meat to the Russian Federation*.

This notice informs inspection program personnel that a new version of FSIS Form 9450-4, dated March 10, should be used to certify poultry meat eligible to be exported to Russia. The revised form replaces the August 27, 2002 version.

This notice, which is effective on May 26, is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Notice_29-06/index.asp.

Contact FSIS' Technical Service Center at (800) 233-3935 with questions regarding Notice 29-06.

Under Secretary for Food Safety Addresses Nation on Summertime Food Safety Mistakes

Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond informed consumers about the most common food safety mistakes people make during warm weather and how to avoid them in interviews with CNN and CBS television this week. In addition, Raymond delivered remarks on a USDA radio on the importance of safe summer grilling.

"The risk of foodborne illness increases during the summer months because disease-causing bacteria grow faster on raw meat and poultry products in warmer weather," said Under Secretary Raymond. "It is critical to make sure raw meat and poultry are cooked to the proper temperatures. When food is properly cooked, pathogens, even *Salmonella* and highly pathogenic avian influenza will be killed."

You can view the recently recorded video news release on safe summer grilling at http://www.usda.gov/agency/oc/bmtc/vidnews.htm .

For more information about this, or other food safety issues, call USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline toll free at 1-888-MPHotline.

FSIS to Begin *Salmonella* Testing of Turkey Carcasses

On May 26, FSIS sent initial sample collection forms for initiating *Salmonella* testing of turkey carcasses to a number of turkey slaughter establishments. Forms, sample collection boxes and supplies should arrive at the establishments within a week.

FSIS issued a Federal Register notice on February 27 titled, *Salmonella Verification Sample Result Reporting: Agency Policy and Use in Public Health Protection*.

The notice announced changes in how the agency uses the results from its *Salmonella* verification sampling program for meat and poultry establishments to enhance public health protection.

In that notice, FSIS announced that it would begin *Salmonella* testing of turkey carcasses.

Export Tip of the Week

Many countries require that an additional health certificate should be provided in addition to FSIS Form 9060-5 when importing meat and poultry products from the United States. Some of these health certificates reference specific directives and/or criteria of the importing country, i.e., European Council directives or World Organization for Animal Health/Office of International Epizootics criteria.

While FSIS inspection personnel may not know what is contained in these directives, FSIS' Office of International Affairs spends time researching and/or discussing the directives with the importing country to make sure FSIS inspection officials can attest to the provisions of these directives.

When additional health certificates are issued, these documents contain only valid certification statements. If the content of the importing country's directive is revised, then FSIS is notified. If we are no longer able to attest to the statement, then the health certificate is amended or withdrawn and the country requirements are revised to reflect the change.

Visit FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp to learn more about requirements for exporting products to other countries.