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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Secretary Johanns Announces Reopening of Japanese Market to U.S. Beef

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns announced on July 27, the reopening of the Japanese market to U.S. beef.

“I am pleased that Japan announced today it would resume imports of U.S. beef from cattle 20 months of age and younger. This has been a long process as we’ve confirmed that our system is in full compliance with Japan’s import requirements and provided Japan with clear, scientific data confirming that American beef is extremely safe. It is gratifying to know that these efforts paid off, as did the patience demonstrated by Congress,” said Johanns.

Johanns stated, “It is unfortunate that the trade resumption launched last December was cut short in January of this year. Nations need reasonable methods of addressing the inadvertent shipment of products that don’t meet an importing country’s specifications, without disrupting an entire trading relationship. The U.S. has such methods of addressing noncompliant shipments from Japan, as well as our other trading partners, and I am hopeful that going forward Japan will take a similar approach.

“As we look forward, we must also continue to strive to move beef trade with Japan and throughout the world toward science-based international guidelines. Science provides us with clear data upon which to build trading standards. All of us must be mindful of these guidelines and work toward complying with them.

“In 2003, the United States exported \$1.4 billion worth of beef and beef products to Japan. I look forward to the day when we resume that level of trade. To that end, I have asked the Japanese government to meet with us this fall to discuss the next steps toward strengthening our beef trading relationship and graduating to standards based in science.”



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Export Requirement Updates



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

European Union

Japan

New Zealand

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

FSIS Holds Technical Meeting on Updated Risk Model for BSE

FSIS hosted a technical meeting on the Harvard Risk Assessment of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in the United States on July 25. The meeting updated food safety agencies and members of the public on the scientific measures of BSE risk.

The agency requested an updated risk assessment model from the university to evaluate the impact of measures implemented after the December 2003 discovery of a BSE-positive cow in Washington State, and recommendations made by an international BSE panel.

Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond said, “We have the safest food supply in the world. The more people understand the science behind it, the more they will believe us. In addition to looking at the actions we have already taken, this report also analyzes the recommendations made by the

panel that was convened to review the actions taken by the United States in response to the BSE case in Washington State.”

The updated risk assessment found that measures enacted by USDA after the 2003 BSE case reduced the potential of human exposure to BSE. The model shows that USDA’s ban on non-ambulatory cattle in the human food supply reduces potential exposure by three percent; prohibition of advanced meat recovery on animals more than 30 months old reduces exposure by about 40 percent; and removing specified risk materials from animals more than 30 months of age nearly eliminates potential human exposure.

The updated risk assessment model and report, along with public comments, are available on FSIS’ Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/RiskAssessments/index.asp.

FSIS to Issue Notice on Technical Service Center Operations

On July 31, FSIS will publish a *Federal Register* notice to seek comments as part of its efforts to improve its Technical Service Center (TSC) operations. FSIS is particularly interested in improving TSC programs that assist small businesses.

The agency is reviewing the organization, operations and services provided by its TSC in Omaha, Neb., with the intent of improving TSC programs that provide technical advice, guidance and information to FSIS personnel, the regulated industry and the general public.

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FSIS Provides Questions and Answers Regarding Certification of Intestines or Animal Casings for Export

FSIS issued Notice 45-06 on July 26, titled, *Questions and Answers for FSIS Notice 34-06, Certification of Intestines or Animal Casings for Export*.

This notice announces the availability of questions and answers regarding Notice 34-06.

FSIS Notice 34-06 informs inspection personnel that, for intestines from an amenable species to be processed into casings that can be certified for export as edible product by FSIS personnel, they must bear the mark of inspection. FSIS will not certify for export intestines that do not bear the mark of inspection.

Notice 45-06 is available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Notice_45-06/index.asp.

TSC Operations ...

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FSIS will be accepting comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by electronic mail at fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov.

The notice will be available on FSIS' Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/2006_Notices_Index/index.asp.

FSIS to Host 2006 Food Safety Education Conference

FSIS will hold a food safety education conference in Denver, Colo., on September 27-29, to focus on educating general and at-risk populations such as pregnant women, children, older adults, immune-compromised patients and culturally diverse populations.

The conference will be held at the Adam's Mark Hotel, 1550 Court Place, Denver, Colo. Pre-conference workshops will be held on September 25-26.

The first day of the conference will feature a workshop titled, "The Physicians Confront Foodborne Illness: Who's Most At Risk and Why." Physicians who treat at-risk patients will discuss the physiological and pathophysiological factors that result in certain populations being more at-risk for a more severe illness or death related to a foodborne illness.

Physicians will also discuss the significance of appropriate diagnosing, as well as the challenges or barriers to obtaining a lab-confirmed diagnosis and reporting foodborne illness.

The conference is sponsored by: FSIS; NSF International; the Food and Drug Administration; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Service; and NSF/World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Food Safety.

The conference will be organized around five primary themes:

- Foodborne Illness Surveillance and Epidemiological Insights;
- Food Safety Behavioral and Attitudinal Research;
- Social Marketing, Educational Interventions and Program Research;
- Role of Food Service and Food Industries; and
- New Technologies.

To register or view the program and a list of presenters, visit FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/denver2006.

FSIS Issues Notice on Sampling Supplies and Using New FedEx Billable Stamp

FSIS issued Notice 44-06 on July 25, titled, *Requesting Sampling Supplies and Using the New FedEx Billable Stamp*.

This notice instructs inspection program personnel, import inspection personnel and investigators from the Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review's Compliance and Investigations Division on how to obtain sampling supplies for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 (*E. coli*) and ready-to-eat microbiological testing.

The notice also instructs the employees on how to use the new Federal Express expanded billable stamp when submitting samples.

Notice 44-06, which is effective on August 1, is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/44-06.pdf>.

Office of Food Safety and Agricultural Marketing Service to Hold Public Meeting on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice on July 25, to announce that USDA's Office of Food Safety and the Agricultural Marketing Service will hold a public meeting to provide draft U.S. positions and receive public comments on agenda items that will be discussed at the 13th Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which will be held from September 25-29, in Mexico City, Mexico.

The public meeting will be held on August 3, from 10 a.m. to noon, in Room 3074, USDA South Agriculture Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20250.

The agency is accepting comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by electronic mail at fsis.regulationscomments@fsis.usda.gov.

The notice is available on FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2006-0020.htm>.

Export Tip of the Week

Changes to country requirements in the Export Library are marked with a red asterisk. may vary slightly, depending on the browser.

For shorter country requirements, a "note" is included as a header indicating that the red asterisk indicates the most recent revision to the requirements. Microsoft Internet Explorer users can facilitate searches within the requirements by clicking on the browser's "Edit" menu located at the top of the browser.

For lengthier country requirements, the same "note" is included as a header, as well as instructions for searching for specific text within the requirements. Click on the "Find (on this page)" option. Enter an asterisk in the "Find What" field, then click "Find Next." This will highlight the first asterisk located in the requirement.

Instructions for searching for specific text within a requirement Keep clicking on the "Find Next" button until you reach the end of

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Helpful Resources

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.

Ask Karen - FSIS' virtual representative can answer your questions 24 hours day, seven days a week. Visit "Ask Karen" at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp.

Cooking For Groups Brochure - Helps hosts of large dinner gatherings and parties prepare and serve food safely for large groups. Available at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Cooking_for_Groups_index/index.asp.

Export Tip ...

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the requirement and all asterisks have been identified.

Netscape users can facilitate searches within the requirements by clicking on the browser's "Search" menu located at the top of the browser.

Click on the "Find in this page" option. Enter an asterisk in the "Find text" field, then click "Find."

This will highlight the first asterisk located in the requirement. Keep clicking on the "Find" button until you reach the end of the requirement and all asterisks have been identified.

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.

**To submit comments or questions,
contact the editor,
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