

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

Update on State Reviews

Purpose

In 2003, FSIS began comprehensive reviews of State meat and poultry inspection (MPI) programs using a new review manual – the FSIS Manual for State Meat and Poultry Inspection Program Reviews. The new manual provides instruction for conducting reviews of State programs to determine whether State requirements are “at least equal to” Federal requirements for ensuring that meat and poultry products are wholesome, not adulterated, and properly marked, labeled, and packaged. The implementation of the new manual is part of the Agency’s effort to update and strengthen policy and procedures for reviewing State MPI programs. The new review procedures detailed in the manual consist of FSIS review teams making initial determinations based on States’ self-assessment submissions, followed by on-site reviews that compare the self-assessment to the implementation. This forms the basis for final determinations.

The purpose of this update is to summarize review results of 28 self-assessment submissions and four on-site reviews using the new Federal review manual and procedures (see Attachment 1). Detailed review findings covering each of the nine review components are presented in two additional reports: Part I. Self-Assessment Report and Part II. On-Site Report.¹

Discussion

The first part of the methodology – initial determinations based on States’ self-assessments – has been completed for all 28 State programs. The second part of the methodology – final determinations based on FSIS on-site reviews – has been completed for 8 of the 28 State programs. Only the results of the first four on-site reviews – Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, and Wisconsin – are reported here; the others are in progress. It is important to note that Component 3, Product Sampling, was completed January – March 2005, one year after the other review components. Component 3 determinations are based on a revised review manual.²

All 28 State programs received an initial determination of “at least equal to” based on nine review components. In addition, the first four States that were reviewed on-site received final

¹ FSIS conducted on-site reviews in four additional states – Delaware, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Ohio – in January 2005, and plans to conduct on-site reviews in four more states – Alabama, Illinois, South Dakota, and Vermont - this fiscal year. These eight on-site reviews are not included in this issue paper and the attached summary report since they have not been completed.

² Working with State programs, FSIS published the revised *FSIS Manual for State Meat and Poultry Inspection Program Reviews* in November 2004, one year after the initial one. The revised manual: (1) clarifies testing requirements for *E. coli* O157:H7, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* in ready-to-eat products, residues, and advanced meat recovery (AMR); (2) merges the review of training requirements with the review of staffing requirements, resulting in nine review components instead of ten; (3) moves all regulations from individual review components to Component 1, Statutory Authority and Food Safety Regulations; and (4) adds a “deferred” determination category that is used by reviewers when a State program is correcting any identified areas of concern.

determinations of “at least equal to.” The comprehensive review process will not be completed until the remaining State programs receive on-site reviews. FSIS will conduct on-site reviews in eight States each year until all State programs have been reviewed.

The NACMPI addressed the issue of State reviews on June 23, 2003. The committee defined “at least equal to” and provided advice on the criteria FSIS should use to evaluate each of the 10 review components (see Attachment 2). FSIS incorporated the committee’s definition of “at least equal to” in the new review manual and procedures. FSIS also incorporated the committee’s suggestion that evaluation criteria focus on program outcomes. The only recommendation that FSIS has not implemented was the committee’s recommendation to re-evaluate funding for State programs. Currently, State cooperative programs receive up to 50% re-imbusement for operating cost.

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Attachments

- (1) FSIS Review of State Programs: Summary Report
- (2) NACMPI Sub-Committee Number 3 Report, June 23, 2003: State Review Methods