



# Commodity Holds & Recalls

Rapid Alert System  
(RAS)

Capabilities & Functions



# Agenda

---

- Rapid Alert System Overview
- RAS ECOS User Functions
- ECOS RAS Hold & Recall Process
- Hold & Recall Coordination
  - State Agencies
  - Recipient Agencies
  - Processors & Distributors
  - Multi-food deliveries
- Summary

# Rapid Alert System Overview

- Developed in 2005 for Commodity Program Food Safety & Security
- Strengthen the hold/recall process
  - Notifications
  - Ongoing communication
  - Data collection
- ECOS is central to hold/recall case management

# RAS ECOS User Functions

- Two RAS user functions in ECOS
  - Recall Contact
  - Recall Role
- Establish User functions in ECOS Administration User Profile
  - User may have either or both functions assigned
- Recommend at least 2 persons per organization for each function

# RAS ECOS User Functions

- Recall Contact
  - User who will receive alerts
  - User specifies up to 3 devices (i.e., email, fax, phone, text messaging)
  - Specify device order for notification
    - *If no contact made on first device then contact on next specified device is attempted.*
  - Must have at least one Recall Contact identified in an organization.

# RAS ECOS User Functions

- Recall Role
  - User who responds to information requests
  - Access to Recall Case response form
    - *Provides information on commodity quantities isolated, destroyed or distributed*
  - ECOS Delivery Order or Receipt Acknowledgement provides initial quantities
  - Must have at least one Recall Role defined in an organization.

# ECOS RAS Hold/Recall Process



- USDA FSIS and HHS FDA issue food product holds and recalls
- FNS Food Safety Unit manages the hold/recall process for commodity programs
- AMS and FSA identify affected contracts and delivery orders

# ECOS RAS Hold/Recall Process

- FSU creates a case in ECOS when hold / recall is declared
  - Document information currently available
  - Create an alert notification message
  - Transmit rapid alert to Recall Contacts identified in ECOS
    - *Affected Agencies and specific delivery orders may not be available at this time*
    - *Additional alerts may be issued during life of case*
      - Increased scope (i.e., products, delivery periods, etc.)



# ECOS RAS Hold/Recall Process

- Recall contacts acknowledge receipt of notification and check ECOS for details
- FSU updates case information with specific DOs identified by FSA or AMS
- FSU updates other case information as it becomes available
- FSU monitors ECOS to ensure all Agencies are aware of hold / recall

# Hold & Recall Coordination

- State Agencies
  - Coordinate RA and Industry partner efforts
  - Monitor ECOS for DO information
  - Monitor ECOS for instructions
  - Collect and compile case information for entry into ECOS case file
    - *Product quantities*
    - *Illness or injury*
  - Manage financial aspects of hold / recall

# Hold & Recall Coordination

- Recipient Agencies
  - Locate and sequester product in possession
  - Provide information to State
    - *Quantities of product sequestered, served or unaccounted for*
    - *Report illness or injury caused by product*
  - Dispose of product as directed



# Hold & Recall Coordination



- Processors & Distributors
  - Locate and sequester product in possession
  - Provide information to State
    - *Identify Recipient Agencies who received product*
    - *Quantities of product sequestered, delivered or unaccounted for*
  - Dispose of product as directed

# Hold & Recall Coordination

- Multi-food deliveries
  - USDA Household Programs coordinates
    - *USDA contacts affected distributors*
      - Sequester affected inventory
      - Identify Recipient Agencies receiving product from affected lots
      - Report quantities on hand, delivered or unaccounted for
    - *USDA contacts Recipient Agencies*
      - USDA provides lot, order and product information
      - RA sequesters product
      - RA reports quantities on hand, delivered or unaccounted for

# Summary

- Every SDA organization
  - Recall Role
  - Recall contact
- Keep notification information current
  - ECOS tracks notification methods and success/failure
- Check ECOS regularly if affected by hold / recall

# Questions

- **Contacts**
  - ECOS Help Desk
    - *Email:* [ECOS-helpdesk@fns.usda.gov](mailto:ECOS-helpdesk@fns.usda.gov)
    - *Phone:* 703-305-2914
    - *Hours:* Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Eastern Time
  - Food Safety Unit
    - *Email:* [Brenda.Halbrook@fns.usda.gov](mailto:Brenda.Halbrook@fns.usda.gov)
    - *Phone:* 703-305-2608
- **Reference**
  - Rapid Alert System User Manual
    - *Training Links on ECOS Web pages*