

OPI: S&T/PPID

TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MEAT AND POULTRY PRODUCTS
CONTAINING PORK TO DESTROY TRICHINAE

I. PURPOSE

This directive clarifies the regulations on the treatment of sausage and sausage-like products for the destruction of trichinae.

II. [RESERVED]

III. [RESERVED]

IV. REFERENCES

MPI Regulations, Sections 318.10 and 381.147

V. BACKGROUND

A. Section 318.10(a) of the MPI Regulations provides that some forms of fresh pork products are usually well cooked in the home or elsewhere before they are consumed. Therefore, such products do not require treatment for the destruction of trichinae that may be present in the pork component of the products.

B. Sections 318.10(a)(2) and 381.147(d)(2) of the MPI Regulations provide that pork found free of trichinae using various tests prescribed in the regulations is not required to be treated for the destruction of trichinae.

C. Pork may be an ingredient in meat and poultry products. In some of these products, the presence of pork may not be readily apparent, and usual cooking procedures may not destroy trichina larvae that may infest the pork. To protect consumers, sections 318.10(b) and 381.147(d) of the MPI Regulations require that certain pork and pork-containing products (including mixtures of pork and other meat or poultry products) other than those containing pork tested as described in Paragraph V., B. above, be treated to destroy trichinae or consist of pork that has been treated to destroy trichinae.

D. The regulations are not precise regarding which mixtures of pork and other meat or poultry products require treatment to destroy trichinae. The regulations state that such mixtures must be treated for trichina when the Administrator determines, upon prior label review or upon product evaluation, that the product may be eaten rare or without thorough cooking because of its appearance or other reasons. A number of such determinations have been made under this provision.

VI. SAUSAGE AND SAUSAGE-LIKE PRODUCTS CONTAINING PORK AND OTHER MEAT OR POULTRY PRODUCTS THAT HAVE BEEN FOUND TO NOT REQUIRE TREATMENT TO DESTROY TRICHINAE

A. Products with a diameter of 1 inch or less. Such sausage and sausage-like products would normally be adequately cooked by the consumer to destroy trichinae that may be present in the pork.

B. Products of any size that are stuffed into plastic or other inedible casings, often called chubs, and labeled with the word "pork" in the product name. These products are designed to be sliced and cooked as patties or removed from the casing and added to other products, such as meat loaf. In both cases, normal cooking, based on the clear information that pork is contained in the product, would ensure the destruction of trichinae.

VII. SAUSAGE AND SAUSAGE-LIKE PRODUCTS CONTAINING PORK AND OTHER MEAT OR POULTRY PRODUCTS THAT HAVE BEEN FOUND TO REQUIRE TRICHINA TREATMENT

A. Products with a diameter of over 1 inch, except as packaged and labeled in Paragraph VI. B. above.

B. Products containing wine or cure.

C. Products that receive a treatment, such as cooking or smoking, which makes it difficult to determine whether the products have been adequately cooked to destroy trichinae.

D. Products containing red peppers, paprika, excess sugar, or any other ingredient which imparts coloring to the raw products or influences the appearance during cooking, thereby making it difficult to determine whether the products have been adequately cooked to destroy trichinae.

E. Products containing unusual ingredients, such as eggs or tomatoes, which make it difficult to determine whether the products have been adequately cooked to destroy trichinae.

For the sausage and sausage-like products described in Paragraph VII. C, D, and E, the establishment or inspector may find it particularly difficult to judge whether treatment to destroy trichinae is necessary. In these cases, the establishment may call the Processed Products Inspection Division at (202) 720-2006 for instructions regarding submitting frozen product samples for a final determination.

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