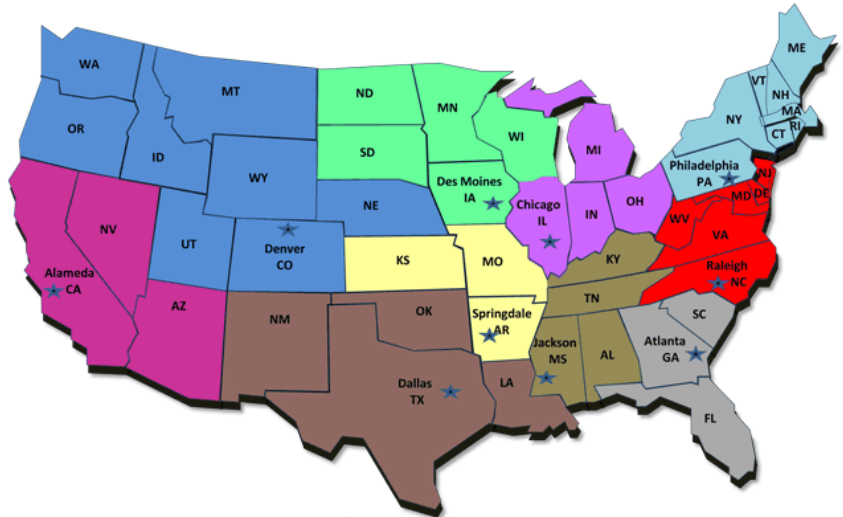




Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Releases Consolidation Map



*District Offices are indicated by stars
*States in each District are indicated by like color

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Volume 14, Issue 5
February 3, 2012

FSIS today released a map that shows the field structure when district offices are reduced from 15 to 10.

The FSIS consolidation follows an announcement last month by Secretary Vilsack that USDA would be closing or consolidating more than 250 offices throughout the country as a cost-saving measure. In addition to reducing costs, the FSIS consolidation will allow the agency to better balance workloads among circuits and districts. To review this map, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/District_Consolidation_Map.pdf.

Under the new plan, the Alameda district office includes Arizona, California and Nevada; the Atlanta district office includes Florida, Georgia, Puerto Rico, South Carolina and the Virgin Islands; Chicago includes Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio; Dallas includes Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas; the

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Export Requirement Updates



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

Chile
Japan
Mexico
Russia
Vietnam
United Arab Emirates

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

FSIS Constituent Update is prepared by the Congressional and Public Affairs Office.

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...Consolidation Map

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Denver district office covers Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Guam, Hawaii, Northern Mariana Islands, Montana, Nebraska, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The Des Moines district includes Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The Jackson district includes Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee; the Philadelphia district includes Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont; the Raleigh district includes Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, Virginia and West Virginia; and the Springdale district includes Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri.

Advisory Subcommittee to Discuss Study on Microbiological Criteria

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods or NACMCF, Subcommittee on Study of Microbiological Criteria as Indicators of Process Control or Insanitary Conditions will hold a series of public meetings, starting on Feb. 7.

During these meetings, the subcommittee will develop recommendations for the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) related to ground beef purchase for the Federal Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs. Specifically, the subcommittee will address questions on microbiological criteria, pathogen testing methodology and sampling plans to support ground beef purchase for the School Lunch Program.

Meeting Schedule

- Feb. 7
Teleconference, Noon to 3 p.m. (ET)
- Feb. 14-17
To be held at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 3209 Frederic Street, Pascagoula, MS 39567, (228) 769-8964. The subcommittee will meet from Feb. 14-16, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Feb. 17, from 9 a.m. to noon.
- Feb. 23
Teleconference, Noon to 3 p.m. (ET)
- March 28
Teleconference, subcommittee report to be presented for adoption at committee plenary meeting, 2 to 5 p.m. (ET)

To register, contact Karen Thomas-Sharp at (202) 690-6620 or karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov or Jude Smedra at (202) 690-6607 or jude.smedra@fsis.usda.gov.

FSIS Policy Update

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. The following policy update was recently issued:

Notice 08-12, *Instructions for Verifying all Steps in the Processing of Ready to Eat Meat and Poultry Products*

All notices and directives are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp.

Register for the 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum

USDA is hosting the 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum, *Moving Agriculture Forward: USDA – Growing, Innovating and Celebrating 150 Years*, Feb. 23-24, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Va.

The forum features 30 breakout sessions, spotlighting a range of issues related to global food security, locally grown foods, fighting foodborne illnesses, sustainability and the farm income outlook for 2012.

To learn more and register for the Forum, visit www.usda.gov/oce/forum.

USDA to Hold Public Meeting for the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues

In collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), FSIS is sponsoring a public meeting to draft agenda items and receive public comments to be discussed at the 44th session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) in Shanghai, P.R. China.

The public meeting will be held on Feb. 14, from 1 to 3 p.m. at EPA in room S-7100, One Potomac Yard South, 2777 South Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 22202.

Items to be discussed include:

- Proposed maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticide residues in food and feed;
- Proposed revision of the Codex classification of foods and animal feeds;
- Proposed guidance for selecting representative commodities for the extrapolation of MRLs for pesticides in commodity groups (proposed guidance for selecting); and
- Guidance to facilitate the establishment of MRLs for pesticides in minor crops and specialty crops.

Documents and agenda items related to the 44th Session of the CCPR will be accessible at www.codexalimentarius.org. For more information about the public meeting, contact Doreen Chen-Moulec at (202) 205-7760 or doreen.chen-moulec@fsis.usda.gov.

To submit written comments, contact Lois Rossi at the Office of Pesticide Programs, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Ariel Rios Bldg, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Individuals may also contact her at (703) 305-5447 or rossi.lois@epamail.epa.gov.

Get Answers at AskFSIS

AskFSIS is a web-based technology and policy question-and-answer forum on topics such as exporting, labeling, inspection, programs and procedures.

In addition, *AskFSIS* offers Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds that link back to the Q&As. To view recently posted topics, visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/>.

Implementation Delayed for Nutrition Labeling Rule

FSIS is delaying the effective date of the final rule that will require nutrition labeling of the major cuts of single-ingredient, raw meat and poultry products and ground or chopped meat and poultry products. The original effective date of the final rule was Jan. 1, but is now delayed until March 1.

The new effective date will ensure that industry has adequate time to comply with the requirements of the final rule.

The *Federal Register* notice announcing the delay was published on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Interim_&_Final_Rules/index.asp.

Updates on FSIS Testing for *E. coli*

Weekly updates for the agency's raw beef *E. coli* sampling program are posted to the FSIS website.

For comparative previous and current year results, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground_Beef_E.coli_Testing_Results/index.asp.

Comment Period on Proposed Rule for Labeling Extended

FSIS proposed a rule on Dec. 5, 2011, that will allow establishments to label a broader range of products without first submitting the label to the agency for approval. The comment period, originally scheduled to close today Feb. 3, 2012, will now close on March 3, 2012.

The extension was granted to allow sufficient time for industry members to: (1) develop comments comprehensively addressing important proposed changes to the prior label approval system; and (2) assemble, analyze and submit data establishments have collected on their experience with the prior label approval system and generic labeling.

Individuals are invited to submit comments electronically through the Federal *eRulemaking* Portal at www.regulations.gov. Comments may also be mailed to USDA, FSIS, OPPD, RIMD, Docket Clearance Unit, Patriots Plaza III, 355 E St., S.W., Rm. 8-164, Washington, D.C. 20024-3221. All items submitted must include the docket number FSIS-2005-0016.

Webinar on Current Generic Labeling System

A webinar on FSIS' generic labeling system will be held on Feb. 14 at 2 p.m. ET. To access the webinar, go to <https://connect16.uc.att.com/usda/meet/?ExEventID=85277207> and follow the on-screen instructions. For questions, contact Kristin Goodwin at (301) 504-0878 or kristin.goodwin@fsis.usda.gov.

Regulatory Webinar Available on Recalls of Products With Undeclared Allergens

The agency will host a webinar on Feb. 7 to provide guidance on addressing a recent increase of products recalled because of undeclared allergens.

The discussion will focus on the steps that establishments can take to prevent the production of items containing undeclared allergens.

To access the webinar, go to <https://connect16.uc.att.com/usda/meet/?ExEventID=85277207> and follow the on-screen instructions. For questions, contact Kristin Goodwin at (301) 504-0878 or kristin.goodwin@fsis.usda.gov.