Appendix I

Comprehensive Review and Determination Report

FY 2012

Louisiana

Federal/State Audit Branch
Internal Control and Audit Division
Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review
Food Safety and Inspection Service
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Introduction

Purpose
This report presents the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) annual review results for the Louisiana Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) program and an overview of the review methodology. FSIS determined that the Louisiana MPI program met the "at least equal to" standard, based on its review of the self-assessment documents, on-site review, and follow-up information.

Background
The Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) (21 U.S.C. 661) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) (21 U.S.C. 454) provide for FSIS to cooperate with State agencies in developing and administering State MPI programs. Individual State MPI programs need to operate in a manner and with authorities that are "at least equal to" the programs that FSIS has implemented under the antemortem and postmortem inspection, reinspection, sanitation, record-keeping, and enforcement provisions of the FMIA and PPIA. In addition, State MPI programs are expected to ensure that livestock are treated humanely by imposing humane handling requirements that are "at least equal to" those FSIS has established under the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1978 (HMSA)(7 U.S.C. 1901 – 1906). The jurisdiction of a State MPI program is limited to product that is produced and sold within the State.

The FMIA and PPIA provide for FSIS to conduct at least annual reviews of State MPI programs and their requirements, including enforcement of those requirements, with respect to slaughter, preparation, processing, storage, handling, and distribution of livestock carcasses and parts, meat and meat food products of such animals, or poultry products (21 U.S.C. 661 (c) (4); 21 U.S.C. 454 (c) (4)). Cooperative agreements and annual certifications of State MPI programs are contingent upon FSIS determining that each State MPI program enforces requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Acts. FSIS performs annual reviews to determine whether each State MPI program meets, and can maintain for a period of 12 months, the mandated "at least equal to" standard.

FSIS Directive 5720.3, *Methodology for Performing Scheduled and Targeted Reviews of State Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs,* and the *"At Least Equal To" Guidelines for State Meat and Poultry Cooperative Inspection Programs* describe the policies and procedures for FSIS comprehensive reviews. FSIS Directive 5720.3 provides FSIS personnel with the methodology to perform these reviews. The *"At Least Equal To" Guidelines for State Meat and Poultry Cooperative Inspection Programs* were developed to assist the State MPI programs establish and maintain inspection programs that are "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program.

Review Methodology
The comprehensive State MPI program review process consists of two parts: (1) an annual review of the State MPI program's self-assessment submission; and (2) a triennial verification on-site review to observe the State MPI program. Through the annual self-assessment and triennial verification on-site reviews, FSIS determines whether the State MPI program is "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program.

Each year, FSIS determines the "at least equal to" status of each State MPI program based on one or both parts of the comprehensive review. If the State MPI program is not scheduled for an on-site review during the fiscal year, FSIS makes an annual determination based on the results of the self-assessment review. If the State MPI program is scheduled for an on-site review during the fiscal year, FSIS makes an annual determination based on the results of both the self-assessment and the on-site review.

Description of State MPI Program
The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) administers the Louisiana MPI program under authority of the Louisiana Revised Statutes (Title 3, Chapter 27). The program verifies and enforces regulatory

requirements at 56 inspected facilities and 23 custom exempt establishments.[1] Additionally, LDAF provides inspection to 4 facilities in the Federal State Cooperative Agreement Inspection Program.[2]

Annual Determination
FSIS determined that LDAF is operating a meat and poultry inspection program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements. This determination was based on: (1) FSIS' annual review of the self-assessment documents, and (2) FSIS' on-site review from April 9 – 20, 2012. This determination is fully explained in the Self-Assessment Review and On-Site Review sections.

Overview of Review Methodology

The review methodology is published in two companion documents: FSIS Directive 5720.3, (March 14, 2011), *Methodology for Performing Scheduled and Targeted Reviews of State Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs,* and the "*At Least Equal To" Guidelines for State Meat and Poultry Cooperative Inspection Programs* (July 2008). These documents describe the methodology used by FSIS' reviewers and provide information to State MPI programs on the criteria that FSIS uses to make its annual determination of whether State MPI programs are "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program. The review process consists of an annual review of the State MPI program's self-assessment submission and a triennial on-site review.

In addition to the annual reviews of each State MPI program, FSIS may perform a targeted review of a State MPI program in response to a condition or event that evidences program weaknesses, or as a reaction to a situation that could clearly result in a risk to public health. These targeted reviews may be conducted in addition to the scheduled reviews or may be performed at the same time. FSIS focuses the scope and activities of the targeted review on the conditions and evidence that triggered the need for the review and analyzes the review results to determine if the State MPI program is maintaining an "at least equal to" MPI program.

The comprehensive review process evaluates the following nine components:

1. Statutory Authority and Food Safety Regulations – This component evaluates whether the State MPI program operates under laws and regulations that provide legal authorities "at least equal to" those provided under the FMIA, PPIA, and HMSA.

2. Inspection – This component evaluates whether State MPI program personnel perform inspection activities to verify whether establishments comply with applicable regulations and take appropriate enforcement actions when establishments are not in compliance with provisions that are "at least equal to" those of FSIS.

3. Product Sampling – This component evaluates whether State MPI program personnel sample meat or poultry products to verify whether they are free of adulterants (e.g., *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw, non-intact, beef products and raw ground beef components, Shiga Toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) serotypes in beef manufacturing trimmings, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* in ready-to-eat products, or drug residues at violative levels), comply with *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* Performance

[1] Custom exempt establishments are slaughter and processing establishments, which are not subject to the routine inspection requirements of the FMIA and PPIA, provided the specified operations meet the exemption requirements of Section 23 of the FMIA and Section 15 of the PPIA.

[2] Facilities operating under the Federal State Cooperative Agreement Inspection Program (FSCIP), also known as Talmadge-Aiken plants or cross-utilization facilities, are under Federal inspection, but operate with State inspection personnel. As a result, these facilities are not reviewed as part of the State MPI program review. However, since State inspection personnel staff these establishments, the number of these establishments is applicable to determinations on Component 4 – Staffing and Training.

Standards in raw classes of meat and poultry, comply with other consumer protection standards, and are accurately labeled (e.g., with nutrition information).

4. Staffing and Training – This component evaluates whether the State MPI program provides competent inspection coverage in each establishment on days the establishment produces products that, if found to be safe, wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled, are to bear the State mark of inspection.

5. Humane Handling – This component evaluates whether State MPI program personnel perform regulatory verification procedures to assess whether establishment personnel humanely handle all livestock and take appropriate regulatory actions in response to noncompliance. State MPI program personnel are to also perform regulatory verification procedures to assess whether poultry carcasses showing evidence of having died from causes other than slaughter are considered adulterated and condemned, and to assess whether poultry is slaughtered in accordance with good commercial practices, in a manner that results in thorough bleeding of the poultry carcass and ensures that breathing has stopped before scalding so that the birds do not drown.

6. Non-Food Safety Consumer Protection – This component evaluates whether State MPI program personnel perform verification procedures to confirm that meat and poultry products are wholesome, not economically adulterated, truthfully labeled, and meets the non-food safety regulatory requirements; and take appropriate actions in response to noncompliance.

7. Compliance – This component evaluates whether State MPI program personnel perform surveillance activities with respect to meat or poultry products in intrastate commerce and take appropriate enforcement actions in the event that adulterated or misbranded products enter intrastate commerce.

8. Civil Rights – This component evaluates whether the State MPI program adheres to Federal civil rights laws and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations.

9. Funding and Financial Accountability[3] – This component evaluates whether the State MPI program conforms to 7 CFR 3016, *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments* and follows FSIS Directive 3300.1, Rev. 2, *Fiscal Guidelines for Cooperative Inspection Programs.*

FSIS determines whether the State's MPI program constitutes an inspection program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements based on the aforementioned criteria.

Part I. Self-Assessment Review

This section includes:

- A description of the self-assessment review methodology followed for all State MPI programs.
- The review of Louisiana's self-assessment submission.
- The self-assessment determination for Louisiana.

[3] In light of the current economic conditions, some State governments are experiencing financial challenges, which may result in overall budget cuts that could affect their meat and poultry inspection programs. To ensure the safety of State-inspected meat and poultry products, FSIS has initiated more vigilant monitoring to track and analyze circumstances and conditions that adversely affect the State MPI program's financial resources. When FSIS identifies concerns with a State MPI program's financial resources, the Agency will further examine each situation to determine the impact on the State MPI Program's inspection activities, product sampling programs, staffing, and compliance activities and determine if the State MPI program is maintaining its "at least equal to" status.

Self-Assessment Review Methodology
The annual self-assessment is designed for each State MPI program to provide sufficient information to adequately demonstrate an "at least equal to" program. The self-assessment submission provides documentation regarding the State's laws, rules, policies, procedures, and programs to provide a basis for FSIS to determine whether the State MPI program meets the "at least equal to" Federal requirements standard. The self-assessment documents are to include evidence and documentation to support that the State MPI program's processes are in effect and current with FSIS policies. Following this submission, FSIS thoroughly reviews the self-assessment documentation.

FSIS' review of the self-assessment submissions begins with the formation of a review team. The review team, comprised of representatives from the Federal State Audit Branch (FSAB), Civil Rights Division (CRD), Financial Review and Analysis Section (FRAS), and other program areas, as needed, evaluates each State MPI program's self-assessment submission to determine whether it meets the "at least equal to" criteria for all nine review components.

As questions arise during the self-assessment review or if more information or supporting documentation is needed, FSIS requests clarifying information from the State MPI program. The FSIS review team then makes a determination based on review of the entire self-assessment submission. For each State MPI program, FSIS makes one of the following three determinations for each component and for the State's overall ability to maintain an MPI program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements:

(1) "At least equal to": Means the State MPI program has adopted laws, regulations, and programs, and implemented them in a manner that is at least equivalent to the Federal inspection program for all review components.

(2) Not "at least equal to": Means the State MPI program has not adopted laws, regulations, or programs, or does not implement them in a manner that is at least equivalent to the Federal inspection program for one or more of the review components.

(3) Deferred: Means FSIS is unable to make a determination of the State MPI program's status because of the program's inability to immediately implement corrective actions resulting from the review findings.

Review of Louisiana's Self-Assessment Submission
FSIS evaluated the self-assessment documents for the nine review components to determine whether LDAF constitutes an inspection program "at least equal to" the Federal program. The determination and rationale for each review component are listed below.

FSAB received LDAF's self-assessment submission, for components 1 through 7, on November 17, 2011. On March 16, 2012, FSAB requested additional clarifying information from the LDAF staff, which was provided on March 23, 2012.

<u>Component 1 – Statutory Authority and Food Safety Regulations</u>
FSAB compared the submitted self-assessment and supporting documentation to the legal authority provided under the FMIA, PPIA, and the HMSA, and the regulations promulgated under these laws. The supporting documentation includes the Louisiana Revised Statues (R.S. Title 3, Chapter 27, (§§3:4201 to 3:4233)) and the Louisiana Administrative Code. The Louisiana Revised Statutes provide authorities for mandatory antemortem and postmortem inspection, and reinspection (§§3:4203 – 3:4205); sanitation requirements (§3:4208); and record-keeping requirements (§3:4219). The Louisiana Revised Statues (§3:4232), in conjunction with the Louisiana Administrative Code (Title 7, Part XXXIII, Chapter 1, Section 101), provide the authority to enforce the humane methods of slaughter requirements.

The Louisiana Revised Statutes provide authorities that are "at least equal to" the FMIA and PPIA regarding adulteration (§3:4201), misbranding (§3:4201), prohibited acts (§§3:4210, 3:4211, and 3:4214), access and examination (§3:4219), and product control actions (§§3:4224 and 3:4225), and "at least equal to" criminal, civil, and administrative sanctions to address violators.

The Louisiana Revised Statutes (§3:4232) grant the authority to promulgate rules and regulations and Louisiana adopts by reference Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (9 CFR) in the Louisiana Administrative Code (Title 7, Part XXXIII, Chapter 1, §101).

In conclusion, LDAF provided evidence to show it operates under State laws and regulations that provide legal authority "at least equal to" that provided under the FMIA, PPIA, and HMSA, and the accompanying issuances.

Component 2 – Inspection

FSAB compared the self-assessment submission and supporting documentation regarding inspection policies and procedures, and verification of establishments' compliance to the Federal requirements. Instead of FSIS' Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS), LDAF uses TASK. TASK is a task-oriented, data-driven inspection system that facilitates information sharing. TASK schedules in-plant inspection procedures, and stores establishment production information, establishment noncompliance records, LDAF sample results, and consumer complaint information. In addition, LDAF reviews custom exempt operations annually, in accordance with FSIS Directive 5930.1, *Custom Exempt Review Process.*

LDAF verifies that establishments develop, implement, and maintain Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems. In addition to LDAF inspectors' ongoing verification procedures, two Enforcement, Investigation, and Analysis Officers (EIAOs) perform Food Safety Assessments (FSAs). These FSAs examine the establishments' food safety systems to include hazard analyses, HACCP plans, Sanitation SOPs, prerequisite programs, sampling programs, and any other programs that constitute the establishments' HACCP systems. The Noncompliance Records (NR) and FSA records support the conclusion that LDAF personnel recognize and document noncompliance, and initiate appropriate regulatory actions.

The Louisiana Administrative Code (Title 7, Part XXXIII, Chapter 1, §101) provides the authority to enforce the FMIA, the PPIA, and 9 CFR, including Part 500, Rules of Practice, when establishments do not comply with regulatory requirements. LDAF maintains an enforcement reporting system to document relevant facts for administrative actions. This system ensures that administrative actions are factual and supportable under LDAF's legal authority.

The submitted documents support the conclusion that LDAF:

- Performs inspection and regulatory verification procedures to confirm that State-inspected establishments comply with applicable regulations.
- Maintains a system to carry out administrative enforcement actions when establishments do not comply with State authorities that are "at least equal to" the FMIA and PPIA.
- Achieves inspection activities "at least equal to" the Federal requirements.
- Monitors these activities through control measures to verify that the inspection system functions as intended.

Component 3 – Product Sampling

FSAB compared LDAF's sampling protocols, procedures, and results to the Federal policies and procedures.

LDAF provided documentation to show that it maintains sampling programs with sound rationale and goals for *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw non-intact beef products and raw ground beef components, *Listeria monocytogenes* and

Salmonella in ready-to eat products, *Salmonella* Performance Standards in raw classes of meat and poultry, and other consumer protection standards. LDAF participates in the National Residue Program, and collects and analyzes inspector-generated samples for violative drug residues. The sampling plans include procedures for sample collection, sample integrity, and laboratory analysis. LDAF developed an action plan to respond to positive results. This plan includes actions to prevent adulterated product from entering commerce.

In conclusion, detailed review of the sampling protocols, procedures, and results confirmed that LDAF maintains verification testing to address adulterants, other measures of properly operating food safety systems, and other consumer protection standards "at least equal to" the Federal requirements and has control measures in effect to confirm that its product sampling system functions as intended.

Component 4 – Staffing and Training

LDAF developed methods to determine staffing requirements, which consider the inspectors' workloads and the number of inspectors required to provide daily inspection coverage in each establishment on days the establishment produces products bearing the State mark of inspection. Procedures are in effect to document staffing in each establishment, identify failures to meet staffing requirements, and correct staffing deficiencies. LDAF management uses the Plant Rating Guide and Risk Management Rating Sheet to determine staffing needs. LDAF district supervisors manage the daily inspection assignments and the inspectors' leave schedules to provide daily inspection coverage in operating inspected establishments. Inspectors complete TASK procedures daily and submit weekly activity reports to district supervisors. If an emergency-leave situation arises and the supervisor is unable to reassign the personnel in his or her area to prevent interruption of daily inspection, the supervisor is to notify the program office. The program office notifies a supervisor in another area to provide coverage for the vacant assignment. As of November 17, 2011, LDAF employed a program manager, an assistant program manager, a veterinary medical officer, a laboratory technician, an administrative assistant, 2 compliance officers, 2 EIAOs, 4 district supervisors, and 32 field inspectors.

LDAF developed a training program for new entry-level inspection personnel. This training program includes administrative orientation followed by inspection training. The training subjects include livestock inspection, slaughter inspection, processing inspection, Food Safety Regulatory Essentials (FSRE), HACCP, Sanitation SOPs, and Sanitation Performance Standards (SPS). Prior to achieving permanent employment status, new employees must complete a 12-month probationary period and demonstrate work competency. LDAF personnel receive additional training through web-based U.S. Department of Agriculture AgLearn courses, and classroom training. LDAF documents training completions on Employee Training Reports, Individual Employee Records, and State training reports.

LDAF administers a State Employee Performance Plan Review system that is mandated for State employees. This system communicates employees' work responsibilities, performance goals and objectives, and annual performance evaluation results. LDAF considers work quality, dependability, cooperativeness, communication, and problem solving skills as key factors in job performance evaluations. District supervisors routinely visit establishments throughout the four LDAF supervisory districts. During these visits, district supervisors review establishments' food safety systems and sanitary conditions, and field inspectors' antemortem and postmortem inspection procedures. LDAF considers the district supervisors' establishment review results, regarding field inspectors' regulatory knowledge application, in the annual performance evaluations. In addition to the routine annual performance evaluations, LDAF evaluates field inspectors' job performance twice during the probationary period, at 6 and 12 months. LDAF has developed control measures to verify that each employee receives an annual performance evaluation.

After thorough review of the submitted documents, FSAB concluded that LDAF has sufficient resources to provide the required inspection coverage at State-inspected establishments to ensure that only safe, wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled meat and poultry products receive the State mark of inspection. The information supports the conclusion that inspection personnel have the education and training needed to apply

LDAF's inspection methodology, document findings, and initiate regulatory actions, when necessary. Control measures are in effect to confirm that LDAF's staffing and training systems function as intended.

Component 5 – Humane Handling

The TASK records demonstrate that LDAF schedules and performs regulatory verification procedures to assess whether establishment personnel humanely handle all livestock throughout the time they are on official establishment premises and takes appropriate regulatory action in response to noncompliance.

LDAF uses FSIS Directive 6900.2, *Humane Handling and Slaughter of Livestock*, to communicate instructions to inspection personnel. If field inspectors observe egregious inhumane handling, they are to immediately suspend inspection and contact the program manager. LDAF management compares the humane handling TASK reports to the scheduled dates of slaughter for each establishment to determine whether the field inspectors performed humane handling verification procedures each day the establishments performed slaughter operations. District supervisors assess humane handling during routine establishment reviews.

In conclusion, the information made evident that LDAF verifies compliance with the humane handling requirements and takes regulatory action "at least equal to" the Federal program. Control measures are in effect to confirm that the humane handling verification system functions as intended.

Component 6 – Non-Food Safety Consumer Protection

LDAF verifies establishment compliance with the non-food safety consumer protection regulatory requirements. LDAF uses TASK to schedule ongoing verification procedures and to document noncompliance.

LDAF maintains a label-approval policy and process to verify that labels are accurate and meet regulatory requirements. In conjunction with the *FSIS Foods Standards and Labeling Policy Book (August 2005)*, LDAF applies 9 CFR 319 as the compliance standard. This process requires establishments to submit completed label-approval applications, label sketches, product formulations, if applicable, or marking devices to the Charleston office for approval prior to use. The label verification procedures include examinations of establishments' packaged products to confirm that labels accurately show the required information.

A thorough review of TASK data, label-approval applications, label sketches, and NRs supports the conclusion that LDAF field inspectors perform regulatory verification procedures and apply the label-approval process. The evidence shows that LDAF protects consumers from meat and poultry products that are unwholesome, economically adulterated, or not truthfully labeled, and is "at least equal to" the Federal program. Control measures are in effect to confirm that the non-food safety consumer protection verification system functions as intended.

Component 7 – Compliance

LDAF personnel conduct in-commerce surveillance of persons or firms who prepare, transport, sell, or offer for sale meat and poultry products in intrastate commerce to verify compliance with State statutory and regulatory requirements, and to verify that meat and poultry products in intrastate commerce are wholesome, correctly packaged and labeled, and secure from threats or intentional acts of contamination.

LDAF investigates alleged or actual statutory or regulatory violations; controls products, when there is reason to believe that the products are adulterated, misbranded, or otherwise in violation of the Louisiana Revised Statues; and takes enforcement action, when needed, up to and including prosecution of individuals or firms that have violated the Louisiana Revised Statues. LDAF has procedures to maintain and preserve the legal integrity of documentary and other evidence to support legal action, and to report transportation accidents that involve State-inspected and passed meat and poultry products.

LDAF management reviews the compliance reports for correctness, extracts pertinent information for reporting purposes, enters the information in a database, and files the hard copies. The enforcement manager and program director review the violations and accompanying evidence, and determine the appropriate case dispositions and courses of action.

LDAF maintains procedures for the recall of meat and poultry products subject to its jurisdiction that are equal to procedures described in FSIS Directive 8080.1, *Recall of Meat and Poultry Products*. These procedures include health hazard evaluation, recall classification, public notification, effectiveness checks, and closure. LDAF oversees the recall activities, coordinates actions to determine whether adulterated product was removed from commerce, and issues press releases, as necessary, to serve the interest of public health.

LDAF established methods to record, triage, analyze, and track consumer complaints related to State-regulated meat or poultry products. Compliance personnel either investigate these complaints or refer them to the local health authority. The investigative methods include procedures to collect and safeguard evidence, conduct interviews, submit product samples to the laboratory, initiate recall procedures or regulatory enforcement actions, and report potential food safety threats.

The submitted documents support the conclusion that LDAF maintains a system to verify compliance of meat and poultry products in intrastate commerce and takes appropriate enforcement actions in the event that adulterated or misbranded products enter intrastate commerce. Control measures are in effect to confirm that the compliance program functions as intended.

Component 8 – Civil Rights

On October 19, 2011, LDAF submitted the required FSIS Form 1520-1, Civil Rights Compliance of State Inspection Programs, to demonstrate adherence to Federal civil rights laws and USDA civil rights regulations. CRD concluded that LDAF functions "at least equal to" the Federal civil rights requirement.

Component 9 – Financial Accountability

LDAF submitted quarterly and final Financial Status Reports (SF-425), and an annual Indirect Cost Proposal to demonstrate it conforms to 7 CFR, Part 3016, *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments*, and follows FSIS Directive 3300.1, *Fiscal Guidelines for Cooperative Inspection Programs.* On October 24, 2012, FRAS determined that LDAF is "at least equal to" Federal standards for financial accountability for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012.

Self-Assessment Determination for Louisiana

Based on the evidence and results discussed above, FSIS determined that LDAF provided adequate documentation to show it operates a meat and poultry inspection program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements. LDAF has adopted laws, regulations, and programs, and implemented them in a manner that is "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program for all review components.

Part II. On-Site Review

This section includes:

- A description of the on-site review methodology followed for all State MPI programs.
- The on-site review of Louisiana.
- The on-site determination for Louisiana.

On-Site Review Methodology

The on-site review determines whether the State implements its MPI program in a manner consistent with its self-assessment documents; and maintains and carries out its MPI program in a manner that is "at least equal to"

the Federal inspection program. FSIS' on-site review team is comprised of representatives from FSAB, CRD, FRAS, and other program areas as needed.

The FSAB program auditor coordinates the on-site review and is the primary contact for State MPI program officials, FSIS officials, and team members. The FSAB program auditor schedules the on-site review, for components 2 through 7, with State MPI program officials. FSAB sends written notification to State MPI program officials at least 30 days prior to the start of the review. CRD and FRAS schedules the on-site reviews of components 8 and 9, respectively.

FSAB's on-site review begins with an entrance meeting teleconference with FSAB and State MPI program officials. During this meeting, FSAB explains the review process, answers any questions, and requests that State MPI program officials submit the following information within ten business days of the teleconference:

- Descriptions of any changes that have occurred in the MPI program since the most recent self-assessment submission
- A current list of establishments receiving inspection from the State MPI program
- A description of each State field supervisor's area of responsibility
- The HACCP processing categories for each State-inspected establishment and a ranking of the highest-volume producers for each HACCP processing category
- A list of all State-inspected establishments that the State MPI program has reviewed (e.g., through a review similar to an FSIS FSA or other State review) within the preceding 12-months
- A list of all State-inspected establishments that have a history of any of the following public health risks within the preceding 12-months:
  - Positive sample results for pathogens (e.g., Shiga Toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) serotypes in beef manufacturing trimmings, *E. coli* O157:H7 in non-intact, raw beef products, or *Listeria monocytogenes* or *Salmonella* in ready-to-eat products)
  - *Salmonella* or *Campylobacter* verification sample set results that exceed the performance standard or guideline established by FSIS
  - Enforcement actions
  - Recalls
  - Structural damage to State-inspected establishments caused by a natural or other disaster

For each State MPI program, FSAB uses a statistically valid sampling method to determine the total number of establishments to review on-site, selects specific establishments to review based largely on the aforementioned public health risks, and includes establishments that the State MPI program reviewed during the preceding 12-months. FSAB shares the list of establishments selected to review with State MPI program officials at least five business days before the on-site review.

At each establishment review, the FSAB program auditor:

- Reviews the State MPI program's verification of compliance with applicable State requirements on HACCP, Sanitation SOPs, SPS, non-food safety consumer protection, control of specified risk material, humane handling, and custom and retail exempt requirements.
- Observes State MPI program inspectors as they perform antemortem and postmortem inspection procedures.

- Documents, based on observation and records review, any establishment noncompliance that the State MPI program failed to identify or for which the State MPI program failed to take an appropriate regulatory action.
- Documents other findings that indicate that the State MPI program is not "at least equal to" the Federal program.
- Reports his or her findings to State MPI program officials at the conclusion of each establishment review.
- Discusses the review findings with State MPI Program officials, and then observes the State MPI Program officials as they lead the exit meeting with establishment management to discuss the findings of each establishment review.
- Ensures, before leaving an establishment, that State MPI program officials have taken appropriate actions with respect to all noncompliances observed during the establishment review.

In addition to the establishment reviews, the FSAB program auditor reviews product sampling, staffing, training, compliance, and management control documents at the State MPI program office. This review includes a representative sample of current State MPI program records and is necessary to determine whether the documents evidence that the State MPI program implements these programs in a manner consistent with the self-assessment documents, and whether the State MPI program maintains and carries out its program "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program.

After the establishment reviews and review of documents in the State MPI program office, FSAB analyzes all information gathered during the on-site review, as well as the results of the current year's self-assessment review, and identifies the findings. The findings are based on the reviewer's independent assessment during the on-site review and comparison of the on-site review findings with the State MPI program's operations and records, including the self-assessment submissions. The review team's findings focus on implementation of food safety policy and procedures and on whether the program meets the criteria for the nine review components. The FSAB program auditor presents the findings to State MPI program officials at the exit meeting teleconference.

The State MPI program must submit within ten business days of the date of the exit conference a written action plan to correct all findings. The action plan needs to:

- Identify the underlying causes of any findings that may be system-wide and ensure statewide correction of such findings.
- Identify the underlying causes of specific findings at individual establishments and ensure that the State MPI program verifies that the establishments address such findings.
- Identify the verification plan or management controls that the State MPI program will implement throughout the year to verify adequate implementation of the corrective actions.

FSIS reviews the information gathered during the on-site review, including the State MPI program's action plan to determine whether the State MPI program is functioning "at least equal to" the Federal requirements. FSIS makes one of the following three determinations for each component and the State's overall ability to maintain its MPI program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements:

(1) "At least equal to": Means the State MPI program has adopted laws, regulations, and programs, and implemented them in a manner that is "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program for all review components.

(2) Not "at least equal to": Means the State MPI program has not adopted laws, regulations, or programs, or does not implement them in a manner that is "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program for one or more of the review components.

(3) Deferred: Means FSIS is unable to make a determination of the State MPI program's status because of the program's inability to immediately implement corrective actions resulting from the review findings.

On-Site Review of Louisiana

FSAB analyzed all information gathered during the on-site review and LDAF's action plan, which addressed the findings identified during the review, to determine whether LDAF has implemented and maintains its MPI program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements; and was enforcing requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Acts. The determination and rationale for each review component are listed below.

FSAB conducted an on-site review of LDAF, for components 2 through 7, from April 9 – 20, 2012.

Component 2 – Inspection

FSAB reviewed the self-assessment documents and compared them to additional documents and conditions presented on-site. The on-site documents reviewed included, but were not limited to, Sanitation SOPs and associated records; HACCP plans and associated records; generic *E. coli* sampling procedures and associated records; procedures for the removal, segregation, and disposition of specified risk materials and associated records; custom exempt records; NRs; and enforcement letters.

FSAB evaluated LDAF during seven establishment reviews. During these reviews, LDAF personnel identified multiple noncompliances with Sanitation SOPs, SPS, HACCP, and labeling regulatory requirements. FSAB identified HACCP and Sanitation SOPs record-keeping noncompliances that LDAF personnel did not identify. LDAF officials initiated regulatory control actions, when necessary, and issued NRs in response to the noncompliances.

On May 23, 2012, LDAF submitted an action plan to correct the findings identified during the review. This plan identifies action items to result in statewide correction of both establishment review and overall program findings. LDAF held a supervisory meeting on May 15, 2012, to present the action plan to district supervisors and to define expectations. Soon after this meeting, LDAF supervisors held work unit meetings, in each district, to instruct inspectors to carry out the action plan. Field inspectors performed in-depth establishment reviews and specifically looked for noncompliances that were the same or similar to those identified during the FSIS on-site review. Field inspectors issued NRs for noncompliances identified during these reviews, took regulatory actions when deemed necessary, and verified that establishments implemented corrective actions to regain regulatory compliance. Field inspectors also sent copies of the NRs to the supervisors. LDAF determined whether the establishments' corrective actions for each noncompliance were acceptable before closing the NRs. In addition, supervisors performed follow-up establishment reviews to verify that the action plan effectively resolved the FSIS review findings. Noncompliances identified during the FSIS on-site review and LDAF's follow-up establishment reviews did not warrant the recall of any meat or poultry products. Subsequently, LDAF provided evidentiary documents to show fulfillment of each action item and statewide verification of establishments' compliance with regulatory requirements.

FSAB analyzed the information from the establishment reviews and LDAF's action plan, and concluded that LDAF personnel identify and document regulatory noncompliance, take appropriate regulatory actions, and verify that establishments correct noncompliance. LDAF verifies that inspected establishments have developed, implemented, and maintain Sanitation SOPs and HACCP systems, which evaluate and address hazards, and routinely verify that products are safe, wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled.

Component 3 – Product Sampling
FSAB reviewed the product sampling self-assessment documents and compared them to additional documents presented on-site to include sampling plans and laboratory results.

FSAB analyzed information from the LDAF office and establishment reviews, and concluded that LDAF maintains sampling plans for *E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella* Performance Standards, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* in ready-to-eat products, violative drug and heavy metal residues, and economic sampling for targeted products. LDAF includes chain of custody documents in the shipping containers and seals these containers with pressure-sensitive seals before delivery to the LDAF diagnostic laboratory on the Louisiana State University campus.

Component 4 – Staffing and Training
FSAB reviewed staffing and training self-assessment documents, and compared them to additional documents and on-site conditions to assess whether LDAF carries out its staffing and training systems consistent with the self-assessment documents and "at least equal to" the Federal requirements. After further analysis of data from the LDAF office and establishment reviews, FSAB concluded that LDAF has an adequate number of trained staff to provide the required inspection coverage in establishments, perform compliance activities, and provide supervisory oversight; and has implemented procedures to ensure daily inspection coverage in operating establishments.

FSAB reviewed the LDAF District Supervisor Reports and State Employees Performance Plan Reviews, and interviewed LDAF supervisors to examine LDAF's performance evaluations. During these performance evaluations, LDAF provides feedback to employees, regarding job performance, and corrects unfavorable performance trends. In addition to the performance evaluations, LDAF communicates program standards and policies to employees through work unit meetings, instructional e-mails, and FSIS issuances.

The review results support the conclusion that LDAF personnel have the education and training needed to apply LDAF's inspection methodology, make decisions based upon the correct application of inspection methodology, document findings, and initiate regulatory actions. The training program includes measures to ensure that inspection personnel receive training in the areas of meat and poultry antemortem and postmortem inspection, humane handling, processed products, HACCP, Sanitation SOPs, rules of practice, compliance, and FSRE.

Component 5 – Humane Handling
FSAB reviewed humane handling self-assessment documents and compared them to additional documents and conditions presented on site. These documents included, but were not limited to, NRs and procedure schedules. FSAB reviewed humane handling of livestock and stunning methods.

FSAB analyzed the information gathered during the establishment reviews and concluded that LDAF adequately enforces the humane slaughter of livestock regulatory standards to ensure that animals presented for slaughter are humanely handled throughout the time they are on official establishment premises. Livestock pens, driveways, and ramps were maintained in a manner that would not cause injury to animals and the establishments were using acceptable driving and stunning methods.

Component 6 – Non-Food Safety Consumer Protection
FSAB reviewed the non-food safety consumer protection self-assessment documents and compared them to additional documents and conditions presented on-site to determine whether LDAF enforces regulatory standards "at least equal to" the Federal requirements. This review included, but was not limited to, procedure schedules, label approvals, labels, and product formulations.

FSAB analyzed information gathered and concluded that LDAF adequately performs ongoing regulatory verification procedures to confirm establishment compliance with labeling, product standards, and other non-food safety consumer protection requirements applicable to products being produced.

Component 7 – Compliance

FSAB reviewed the self-assessment documents and compared them to additional documents presented on-site. These included, but were not limited to, Reports of Investigation, Daily Activity Reports, Programmed Compliance Plans, Incident Reports, Case Reports, Reports of Apparent Violations, Letters of Warning, Notices of Detention, Notices of Determination of Detention, and Food Defense Surveillance Findings Forms.

LDAF's compliance review system incorporates the methods described in FSIS Directive 8010.1, *Methodology for Conducting In-Commerce Surveillance Activities*. LDAF compliance officers perform surveillance activities that include food safety, food defense, non-food safety consumer protection, order verification, imported products, public health response, and product control actions.

LDAF compliance officers investigate alleged or actual regulatory violations and initiate product control actions, when necessary. The Reports of Investigation are completed in accordance with FSIS Directive 8010.4, *Report of Investigation*. Both compliance officers have peace enforcement officer credentials from the Louisiana Peace Officer Standards and Training Council. These credentials authorize the compliance officers to make arrests, perform searches and seizures, or execute criminal warrants to enforce Louisiana laws.

LDAF follows the recall procedures in FSIS Directive 8080.1, *Recall of Meat and Poultry Products*, with minor modifications. No State-inspected establishments or retail firms recalled product during FY 2012.

LDAF has developed a system to record, triage, analyze, and track consumer complaints related to State-regulated meat or poultry products. The compliance officers follow the guidance in FSIS Directive 5610.1, *Procedures to Implement the Consumer Complaint Monitoring System (CCMS)*.

FSAB analyzed the information gathered during the review of LDAF office records and concluded that LDAF conducts surveillance, investigations, enforcement, and other activities to ensure that meat and poultry products distributed in intrastate commerce for use as human food are safe, wholesome, correctly labeled and packaged, and secure from threats or intentional acts of contamination.

Component 8 – Civil Rights

On July 23, 2012, CRD reviewed documents and conditions at the LDAF offices to determine whether LDAF complies with Federal civil rights laws and USDA civil rights regulations, and achieves the intended outcome of the Federal requirements. The review considered the following four areas: Public Notification, Civil Rights Training, Discrimination Complaints, and Program Accessibility.

CRD analyzed the information gathered during the on-site review of LDAF and concluded that LDAF is "at least equal to" Federal civil rights requirements.

Component 9 – Financial Accountability

FRAS did not conduct an on-site financial audit and compliance review of LDAF in FY 2012. Therefore, the annual determination was based on the self-assessment review results only.

On-Site Determination for Louisiana

Based on the evidence and results discussed above, FSIS determined that LDAF operates its MPI program "at least equal to" the Federal requirements for all review components, and enforces requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Acts.