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FSIS Issues Notice on FSAs Relating to *Salmonella* Control

Last Wednesday, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued FSIS Notice 49-07, "Conducting Food Safety Assessments Related to the Control of *Salmonella*," primarily for poultry slaughter facilities. This Notice is intended to provide Enforcement Investigation and Analysis Officers (EIAOs) that are conducting food safety assessments (FSAs) in poultry slaughter establishments with the Agency's expectations regarding *Salmonella* control in order to gain some consistency in the review of the establishment's food safety systems. Those establishments meeting Category 1 should be able to address *Salmonella* in their SSOPs, other pre-requisite programs, or HACCP plan, and as long as there are no other concerns in the food safety system, the system should be deemed acceptable. For Category 2 establishments, the same applies, although these establishments will more likely to have to answer questions and have support for the decisions made. And finally, those in Category 3 should expect to have a CCP in the HACCP plan to control *Salmonella*. EIAOs are instructed to complete the report similar to other FSA reports, but must include a brief summary of the establishment's procedures at each step of the HACCP process, including whether there are procedures at each step to control or effectively minimize the occurrence of *Salmonella*, either as part of the HACCP plan or Sanitation SOPs, and, if so, what procedures are in place. The purpose of this summary is to provide a description of the food safety system in operation at the time that the FSA was conducted. For a detailed summary of this Notice, including suggestions to assist establishments in avoiding EIAO concerns, by SMA legal counsel Olsson, Frank and Weeda, P.C., please email phyllis@southwestmeat.org. The Notice is available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/49-07.pdf.

UK Officials: FMD Outbreak Contained

Great Britain's recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Surrey could effectively be over by the end of the week if no new cases emerge, according to one of the Britain's senior microbiologists. The highly infectious disease was found in livestock on two farms in Surrey, but tests on two other suspected properties proved negative. "If there's nothing more by the end of this coming week I think we can be pretty certain we are in the clear," Hugh Pennington, a bacteriology professor and one of the country's leading food safety experts, told the BBC. John Oxford, one of the country's leading virologists, also told the broadcaster the outbreak was in effect "over," but Pennington said it was important not to relax protection and surveillance measures. Chief Veterinary Officer Debby Reynolds said today that if no new cases are discovered by the end of this week, remaining restrictions on livestock movement would start to be relaxed. She emphasised the continuing need for "relentless vigilance, strict biosecurity, and early reporting of disease." As a result of the outbreak, more than 570 animals have been destroyed, and the European Union and individual countries have banned British meat and dairy exports. Farmers say the trade curbs are costing them £1.8 million a day. A severe outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in 2001 forced the slaughter of six million animals and inflicted billions of dollars of losses on farmers and the tourism industry, as much of the countryside was closed to visitors. Inspectors are continuing to trace the potential source of the disease, with a research facility at Pirbright in Surrey that was developing vaccines for foot-and-mouth disease seen as the probable source of the outbreak. (*Reuters News, ireland.com, 8/13/07*)

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to be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, **September 18-20, 2007**, hosted by SMA and the Texas A&M Department of Animal Science. The course provides hands-on training in developing a HACCP program for all types of meat slaughtering and processing facilities.

Registration forms are available on our website at southwestmeat.org or by contacting the SMA office.

Sign up today!

FSIS Releases IKE Scenario on Foreign Material Contamination

Last week the Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) Interactive Knowledge Exchange (IKE) released IKE Scenario 06-07: Foreign Material Contamination. This IKE is being issued in support of FSIS Directive 7310.5, "Presence of Foreign Material in Meat or Poultry Products," and discusses what inspection program personnel should consider when verifying that an establishment has properly addressed the finding of a foreign material in its product. It is available at www.fsis.usda.gov/FSIS_Employees/IKE_06-07/index.asp. The IKE begins with a review of Directive 7310.5 and walks an inspector through verification that the establishment followed its "detection, segregation, and disposition procedures" and, if these were properly followed, no action is taken. In the example provided, a metal meat hook is discovered before product was ground. In this case, the establishment determined the "meat hook" did not meet the establishment's criteria for a food safety hazard and that they would address it as an SSOP issue. Inspection program personnel then review the establishment's SSOP records to ensure that the regulatory requirements of 9 CFR 416.15 have been met. The inspection personnel also conduct a HACCP procedure to verify the establishment's monitoring at their metal detection CCP and complete FSIS form 8140-1, Notice of Receipt of Adulterated or Misbranded or Adulterated Product as per FSIS Directive 8140.1. This is based on the fact that the metal was found on in-coming product. The form will be sent to inspection personnel at the producing establishment who will respond by conducting verification procedures. In their summary review of this IKE scenario, SMA legal counsel notes that this may work for a "meat hook," but are not convinced the Agency thought through the ramifications when the source of the raw material is not quite so clear cut. The use of the 8140-1 form and receipt by your supplier's inspector could generate concerns which should be considered and dealt with on a case-by-case basis with your suppliers. At a minimum, upstream notification is suggested. For a summary of this IKE by SMA legal counsel Olsson, Frank and Weeda, P.C., please email phyllis@southwestmeat.org. Directive 8140.1 may be reviewed at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/8140.1.pdf and Directive 7310.5 may be reviewed at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/7310.5.pdf.

APHIS Announces Public Meeting on Foreign Animal Diseases

The Secretary of Agriculture's advisory committee on foreign animal and poultry diseases will meet August 21 to discuss the U.S. animal health emergency management system and the United States response to foreign animal diseases worldwide. The meeting is scheduled from 8 AM to 5 PM in the Jamie L. Whitten Building, 12th Street and Jefferson Drive SW, Room 107-A, in Washington, D.C. The committee, which is comprised of animal health experts from universities, industry and state departments of agriculture, advises the Secretary of Agriculture on actions necessary to prevent the introduction of foreign livestock and poultry diseases into the United States. In addition, the committee advises the Secretary on contingency planning and on maintaining a state of preparedness to deal with these diseases, if introduced. Additional information about the meeting can be obtained by contacting Bethany O'Brien, acting director, interagency coordination, emergency management, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' veterinary services program, at 301-734-0825. Notice of the public meeting was published in the August 2, 2007 *Federal Register*.

Briefly . . .

Angus Association Partners with USDA to Register Premises for NAIS: The USDA announced a partnership with the American Angus Association that will facilitate the registration of up to 15,400 new premises as part of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The premises registration component of NAIS ensures the availability of a nationwide communications network to assist livestock owners and animal health officials in the event of an animal disease event. More than 408,500 premises nationwide have been registered to date. "This agreement marks another important step in our effort to protect animal health by implementing the National Animal Identification System," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for USDA's marketing and regulatory programs. "The American Angus Association has long supported NAIS. It is the best way for Angus breeders to protect the health of their herds in the face of a serious animal health threat." Under the terms of the agreement, the American Angus Association will utilize its resources to reach every association member and provide education about NAIS through the Angus Journal, Angus Beef Bulletin, Angus e-mail list, seminars, national events, affiliates and other associations. Founded in 1883, the American Angus Association has 26,000 active members and registered more than 347,000 head of cattle in 2006.

U.S. Sends Beef Trade Delegation to China: The Bush administration dispatched a high-level team of negotiators to China last week to try to persuade that country to lift restrictions on U.S. beef and allow U.S. exports after four years of effectively banning them. The team is made up primarily of delegates from USDA and the U.S. Trade Representative's office, U.S. government officials said Wednesday, with USDA Deputy Under Secretary Chuck Lambert leading the U.S. effort. The USTR team also includes former chief agriculture negotiator Richard Crowder, who now serves as a consultant, a USTR spokesman said.

Four Countries Ban Nebraska Poultry: Four countries have temporarily banned the import of Nebraska poultry after a turkey flock tested positive for a mild strain of bird flu. Nebraska's deputy state veterinarian said Wednesday that the flock shows no sign of illness, and is being prepared for slaughter and entry into the food supply. USDA and trade groups said no human cases of bird flu have ever been traced to eating properly cooked poultry or eggs, but officials in Japan, Russia, Turkey and the Philippines are taking no chances. "This ban and other emergency measures were necessary to protect human health and the poultry industry in the Philippines," said that country's agriculture secretary.



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