

# SMA InfoMeat

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## FSIS Announces Proposed Timeline for Implementing RBI

Last Thursday FSIS announced a proposed timeline for implementing “more robust” risk-based inspection (RBI) in processing plants. The agency is proposing to begin Phase 1 in April with 30 locations representing about 254 establishments and potentially expanding to approximately 150 locations by the end of 2007. USDA’s Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond stated, “To better protect public health, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) intends to better utilize information regularly collected by inspection program personnel at processing establishments to improve food safety. By taking into account the relative risk of what each processing plant produces and how each plant is controlling risk in its operations, FSIS will more effectively allocate inspection resources to those processing plants needing it the most, while continuing daily inspection at all processing facilities.” Raymond noted that incorporating risk prevention more thoroughly into inspection activities has been an ongoing process at FSIS, from the implementation of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system in 1998 to the 2006 *Salmonella* reduction initiative. Raymond said that gradually implementing risk-based inspection will ensure that all aspects of the program can be thoroughly evaluated and revised as needed before it is expanded nationwide. As proposed, Phase 1 of the initiative should have little impact on current inspection; it should merely result in a slight increase of PBIS scheduled tasks at establishments calculated to pose a greater risk based on a calculation that includes inherent risk, control factors and volume. Phase 2 is anticipated to begin by January 1, 2008 and will take the experiences gained from Phase 1 (and the second expert elicitation) to refine the program. FSIS hopes to expand RBI Processing to 150 circuits by January 1st and be fully implemented by the summer of 2008. For a summary of FSIS’ proposed implementation of RBI by SMA legal counsel Olsson, Frank, and Weeda, P.C., email [phyllis@southwestmeat.org](mailto:phyllis@southwestmeat.org). For more information about risk-based inspection in processing plants, visit FSIS’ website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/RBI\\_in\\_Processing/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/RBI_in_Processing/index.asp).

## FSIS Posts Regulatory Sampling Results, *Salmonella* Report

FSIS posted the annual sampling results from its regulatory testing program for ready-to-eat products on Friday. The released results include data from the agency’s regulatory testing program for *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *E. coli* O157:H7 in ready-to-eat meat and poultry products. The testing data can be viewed on the FSIS website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Micro\\_Testing\\_RTE/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Micro_Testing_RTE/). The Agency also posted the fourth quarterly progress report on *Salmonella* testing of selected raw and meat poultry products. In February 2006, FSIS posted in the *Federal Register* its intention to publish results quarterly and to change how it used the results from its *Salmonella* verification sampling program for meat and poultry establishments as a way to enhance public health protection. FSIS is now providing the results from individual *Salmonella* verification sample tests that the agency regularly conducts at meat and poultry establishments to those establishments that have asked to be informed. The quarterly report covers data for October-December 2006, presented in three formats: percent positive *Salmonella* tests by product class and establishment size; proportion of establishments in each of the three categories (broiler chickens, market hog and cow/bull establishments); and *Salmonella* results summarized by product class for the most recent five quarters. The quarterly report is available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Quarterly\\_Salmonella\\_Results/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Quarterly_Salmonella_Results/).

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## U.S. Red Meat Exports Increased in 2006

The year-end numbers for U.S. meat exports for 2006 showed continued record breaking U.S. pork exports, rebounding U.S. beef exports, and increasing totals of U.S. lamb exports. The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) reported that U.S. pork and pork variety meat exports totaled 1.26 million metric tons (mt), a 9% increase over the previous year. Value also increased 9% in 2006, reaching more than \$2.86 billion. Although a great deal of attention was focused on resumption of U.S. beef trade in Japan, it remained the top market in value for U.S. pork, while Mexico led all markets in volume of U.S. pork exports. U.S. beef and beef variety meat exports worldwide increased 39% in volume to 655,920 mt and 50% in value to \$2.04 billion in 2006, compared to 2005. "Export volume outpaced our forecast by 3% and this growth occurred without market access to Korea, and limited access to Japan," said Erin Daley, USMEF manager, research and analysis. "U.S. beef export volumes in 2006 were 16.5% higher than 2003, prior to the BSE case." For the third consecutive year, Mexico led all markets in volume and value for U.S. beef in 2006, while exports to the Middle East doubled. U.S. lamb and mutton exports also increased 55% in volume in 2006 to 13,934 mt and 66% in value to \$27.8 million over 2005, with Mexico leading the market. For a breakdown of export statistics by market, visit the USMEF website at [www.usmef.org/](http://www.usmef.org/).

## USDA Closes Northwestern BSE Testing Lab

The only BSE testing laboratory in the Pacific Northwest will close March 1, just over three years after a Yakima Valley dairy cow tested positive for the chronic brain-wasting disease. The Washington State University lab opened after the nation's first case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in December 2003 prompted new safeguards. The closure of BSE testing at WSU and several other locations across the country comes after the U.S. Department of Agriculture determined the prevalence of the disease in the nation's cattle herd is "extraordinarily low." The agency has determined that costly testing and tracking programs aren't necessary, and has downsized the number of animals tested to approximately 40,000 per year. Of 759,000 animals tested, including 45,000 in the Northwest, only two other infected cows were found after the initial mad cow scare. WSU spokesman Charlie Powell said that the lab is basically one room inside the Washington State University's Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, one of seven state laboratories conducting testing for USDA. Powell added that when the USDA contract ends this week, the high-technology robotic equipment will remain in place and be used for other types of testing.

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**PAK QUALITY FOODS** in San Angelo, TX is adding to our warehouse management team. Minimum requirement is experience as either a shipping foreman or lead man. Top candidates need experience as a manager or foreman over the entire operation of a meats distribution warehouse. UPC scanning experience a plus. Salary based on qualifications with 401K and insurance. Email resumes to [pakmanqf@yahoo.com](mailto:pakmanqf@yahoo.com) or fax to **325-658-6947**.

**Mark Your Calendars**

March 29-30 – Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

May 1-3 – Developing and Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

**Briefly . . .**

**FSIS Posts Commonly Asked Questions on Red Meat Slaughter:** FSIS issued Notice 13-07 on February 22 titled, "Availability of Questions and Answers regarding Red Meat Slaughter Operations." This notice informs inspection program personnel that the agency posted to its website commonly asked questions from small and very small establishments on how such establishments can comply with agency requirements regarding red meat slaughter operations. The Q&A documents are available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Help/FAQs\\_Small\\_&\\_Very\\_Small\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Help/FAQs_Small_&_Very_Small_Plants/index.asp).

**FDA Offers Web-based Food Defense Awareness Training:** In July 2006, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced its new food defense awareness initiative, ALERT. ALERT identifies five key points that industry and businesses can use to decrease the risk of intentional food contamination at their facilities. In an effort to ensure that all stakeholders have access to the ALERT message, FDA has developed a web based training module titled "ALERT: Food Defense Awareness". This training module provides stakeholders with the information they need to begin thinking of ways to prevent intentional food contamination within their scope of control. The ALERT training module is now available at: [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/alerttoc.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/alerttoc.html). If you have any questions regarding the ALERT initiative, including the content of the web-based training module, please contact Marion Allen via email at [marion.allen@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:marion.allen@fda.hhs.gov) or by phone at 301-436-1584.

**FSIS Proposes Changing Eligibility of Chile to Export Poultry to U.S.:** The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is proposing to add Chile to the list of countries eligible to export poultry and poultry products to the United States. Reviews by FSIS of Chile's laws, regulations, and inspection implementation show that its poultry inspection system requirements are equivalent to the relevant provisions of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) and its implementing regulations. Under this proposal, poultry and poultry products processed in certified Chilean establishments may be exported to the United States. All such products will be subject to re-inspection at United States ports-of-entry by FSIS inspectors. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted until April 27, 2007.

**FSIS to Hold Regulatory Education Session in Wisconsin:** FSIS will hold a regulatory education session on February 28 for the owners and operators of small and very small plants in Wisconsin. The regulatory education session will offer participants in-depth information on sanitation performance standard regulations and food defense. The session will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Crowne Plaza Madison East Towne, 4402 East Washington Avenue, Madison, WI. To register by phone, call 800-336-3747. Online registration forms and information about upcoming sessions can be found at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Outreach\\_Sessions\\_SVS\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp).

**POSITION AVAILABLE**

**Food Safety Net Services**, is a fast-growing private company seeking to hire an Auditing Specialist to work at our San Antonio, Texas facility. This individual will conduct food safety, animal welfare, regulatory, product evaluation, and customized audits for plants and processing facilities in the meat, pork, and poultry areas as well as other food industry areas. Please apply on our website @ [www.food-safetynet.com](http://www.food-safetynet.com). FSNS is an EOE.

**Does Your HACCP Plan Need An Update?  
Are You Ready for an FSIS Team Review?**

**Register now for "Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop for Raw and Cooked Product Operations,"** hosted by SMA, NMA, and the Texas A&M University Department of Animal Science, **March 29-30, 2007** at Texas A&M University.

This workshop will provide a review and evaluation of your company's HACCP plan, with hands-on help to improve it. Registration information and course outline are available on our website.

**Sign up today!**