

SMA InfoMeat

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FSIS Refines *E. coli* Sampling Methods

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), in collaboration with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, has conducted an extensive validation of a more sensitive enrichment broth for *E. coli* O157:H7 sampling - Modified Tryptone Soya Broth with Novobiocin or Modified Trypticase Soy with Novobiocin (mTSB+n). The broth was found to support more rapid growth of *E. coli* O157:H7 compared to the broth FSIS laboratories have been using in past years. This new broth will allow FSIS laboratories greater flexibility in incubation time prior to conducting screening tests and, for some samples, allow screening tests to be conducted earlier on the second day of analysis. Based on testing with inoculated samples, FSIS believes the new enrichment procedure may provide increased sensitivity for detection in some samples; therefore, there may be some increase in the number of *E. coli* O157:H7-positive samples found by FSIS laboratories. The mTSB+n enrichment broth is cost-effective and used by many laboratories around the world. FSIS will begin implementation of this broth in its laboratories starting January 28. The Microbiology Laboratory Guidebook (MLG) chapter 5.03 protocol available on the FSIS website will be revised and reissued as MLG chapter 5.04 to describe the use of improved enrichment and confirmatory identification procedures. Additional revisions to the method protocol include an updated limit of detection and instructions for preparing beef trim/ground beef component subsamples and environmental sponge samples for analysis. The refined protocol will be posted on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Microbiological_Lab_Guidebook/index.asp.

FSIS Issues New Policies for Salmonella Verification Sampling

Today the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced new policies for the Agency's *Salmonella* Verification Sampling Program and related activities conducted in meat and poultry establishments. These changes include publication of completed FSIS verification sample set results for establishments that show inconsistency in their ability to meet *Salmonella* performance standards, beginning with those from young chicken slaughter establishments; a voluntary incentive-based program for meat and poultry establishments that should yield significant data on attribution of human illness to FSIS-regulated products; and increasing the Agency's use of targeted sampling approaches and collaborative serotype and subtype data. FSIS is taking these actions to advance its efforts to achieve the Agency's public health goal of significantly reducing human cases of salmonellosis. The Notice explains the basis for these actions and responds to comments received by the Agency on its *Federal Register* Notice of February 27, 2006 on *Salmonella* policy. The *Salmonella* verification sampling program formally began with the Agency's Final Rule on Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (PR/HACCP) Systems that issued on July 25, 1996. Among other things, the PR/HACCP rule set *Salmonella* performance standards for establishments that slaughter selected classes of food animals or that produce selected classes of raw ground products. FSIS uses the *Salmonella* performance standards to ensure that each establishment is consistently achieving an acceptable level of performance with regard to controlling and reducing harmful bacteria on raw meat and poultry products. The microbiological performance standards for reduction of *Salmonella* in raw products, coupled with performance criteria for use with *E. coli* testing allow FSIS to verify the effectiveness of process controls in slaughter establishments. For a detailed summary of the Notice 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/FRPubs/2006-0034.htm.

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FSIS Issues Notice on Reassessment of HACCP Plans

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) recently issued Notice 9-08, Verification of the Annual Reassessment and Establishment Training Requirements Under the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System. The notice instructs inspection program personnel on how to verify that an establishment has met the HACCP annual reassessment and training requirements under 9 CFR 417.4(a)(3) and 417.7, respectively. This notice cancels FSIS Notice 35-07 and updates the information found in that notice. Every establishment is required to reassess the adequacy of its HACCP plan at least annually and whenever any changes occur that could affect its hazard analysis or alter its HACCP plan. The establishment may reassess its HACCP plan(s) any time during the calendar year to meet the annual requirement. Under 9 CFR 417.7(b), the individual who performs the annual reassessment, as well as any person who develops a HACCP plan for an establishment or modifies a HACCP plan, must have completed a course of instruction in the application of the seven principles of HACCP for meat or poultry product processing, including a segment on the development of a HACCP plan for a specific product and on record review. To view this notice, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/09-08.pdf.

FDA Releases 2008 Update on Feed Enforcement Activities

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently released a 2008 update on feed enforcement activities to prevent the establishment and amplification of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) through feed in the United States. The FDA implemented a final rule that prohibits the use of most mammalian protein in feeds for ruminant animals, now known as the Ruminant Feed Ban, on August 4, 1997. FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) assembled data from over 59,000 inspection reports that have been conducted as of January 12, 2008. The majority of these inspections (approximately 70%) were conducted by State feed safety officials, with the remainder conducted by FDA officials. Inspections conducted by FDA or State investigators are classified to reflect the compliance status at the time of the inspection based upon the objectionable conditions documented. These inspection conclusions are reported as Official Action Indicated (OAI), Voluntary Action Indicated (VAI), or No Action Indicated (NAI). The update is available online at www.fda.gov/cvm/CVM_Updates/BSE0108.htm.



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Mark Your Calendars

for these upcoming SMA Events:

- Dec 11-13 – Developing and Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas
A&M University, College Station, TX
- Jan 30 – SMA Board of Directors Meeting
- Feb 12-14 – Developing and Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas
A&M University, College Station, TX
- Mar 27-28 – Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

Briefly . . .

Agency to Host *E. coli* Regulatory Workshop: FSIS will hold a regulatory education workshop in Dallas, Texas, on January 30 to cover prerequisite programs and FSIS Notices 65-07, 66-07 and 68-07, with special emphasis on *E. coli* O157:H7. The regulatory education session will be held from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM, at the Crowne Plaza Suites-Dallas Park Central, 7800 Alpha Road, Dallas, Texas. To register by phone, call 800-336-3747.

Online registration forms and information about this session can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp.

APHIS Announces New Deputy Administrator of Marketing, Regulatory Programs: Gregory Parham has been named deputy administrator of the marketing and regulatory programs business services unit within the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). “Greg’s years of distinguished federal service, dedication to customer support and expertise in the field of information technology make him an ideal choice for this position,” said administrator Cindy Smith. In his new role, Parham is responsible for providing a variety of support services including human resources management, financial management and procurement and contracting that support the objectives of APHIS, the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Grain Inspection and Packers and Stockyards Administration. These three agencies collectively form the marketing and regulatory programs’ mission area of USDA. In addition, Parham will provide a variety of support services to APHIS, including information technology management and investigative services.

USDA Updates Export Library: Both Indonesia and Barbados have removed all restrictions on U.S. beef imports that were imposed because of concerns about bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). Cattle 30 months of age and over must remove specified risk materials (SRM) as listed in the FSIS Export Library, and exporters to Indonesia must obtain a Certificate of Islamic Slaughter. In 2005, Indonesia imported \$17 million in beef and beef products and in 2007, Barbados imported an estimated \$2.6 million of beef and beef products. Detailed information is available online at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Indonesia_Requirements/index.asp and www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Barbados2_requirements/index.asp, respectively.

Ranchers Protest Meat Imports from Argentina: U.S. ranchers and the United States Cattlemen’s Association (USCA) went to Washington last week to protest the Bush administration’s plans to import meat from Argentina despite concerns about foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). USDA proposed a rule in early 2007 to allow meat imports, primarily mutton and lamb, from Argentina’s southern region of Patagonia. Argentina has struggled with FMD in the past, and USDA had responded by limiting imports of meat from the country. In its 2007 proposal, however, the USDA noted that the country’s southern region has been FMD-free since 1976, and that Argentina’s inspection system is thorough and would detect and stop FMD if it returns. USCA and a number of other cattlemen organizations also sent a letter Tuesday to Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), the panel’s ranking member, calling for hearings about the proposed regulation.





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