

# SMA InfoMeat

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## FSIS Expands Follow-Up Sampling Program for *E. coli*

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is developing a new *E. coli* O157:H7 sampling program. Under this program, FSIS will conduct follow-up samples at suppliers' establishments, based on a **receiving establishment's** positive O157:H7 test result on raw ground beef components, including trim. In essence, FSIS is expanding its follow-up sampling beyond FSIS regulatory samples to include private laboratory results. FSIS Notice 39-08, "Collecting Information on Receiving Establishment *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 Testing," does not provide any specifics as to the upcoming sampling program itself. The Notice is limited to obtaining information on receiving establishment testing of raw ground beef components. Specifically, it instructs inspectors to review establishment testing of incoming trim and other raw ground beef components and report the findings to the Establishment Practice Mailbox in Outlook. This is a one-time survey to be conducted by inspectors at establishments which receive trim and other raw ground beef components. These inspectors are to review any establishment testing of incoming materials pursuant to the HACCP Records Access Directive, 5,000.2. If the establishment does not conduct *E. coli* O157:H7 testing on incoming materials, the inspector is to e-mail the establishment number and a statement that no incoming testing is conducted. If the establishment does conduct testing, the inspector is to verify that the testing is on incoming product that has not been commingled with product of other suppliers or further processed and then report for such product:

- The total number of samples analyzed;
- The start and end date for the 2 month (60 day) review; and
- The total number of presumptive positives/positives and the type of product testing positive

If possible, the inspector is to report the sampling method used by the establishment, such as N-60, and the analytical method. The inspector apparently does not report the identity of establishments which provided positive product. OPHS will summarize the data as well as conduct an analysis to determine the estimated burden on FSIS inspection and laboratory resources under the upcoming sampling program. The notice is available online at [www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/39-08.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/39-08.pdf). (Thanks to Brett Schwemer at Olsson, Frank and Weeda, P.C for this summary.)



**Register now to attend our 52nd Annual Convention and Suppliers' Showcase, July 16-19, 2008 at the historic Camelback Inn in Scottsdale, AZ!**

**If you haven't received a convention registration packet by mail, please call the SMA office or you may download it from our website at [www.southwestmeat.org](http://www.southwestmeat.org). Don't forget to make your hotel reservations early!**

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## U.S. Beef Exports to Korea Face Delays, More Violent Protests

South Korean officials now say they will not import U.S. beef from animals over 30 months of age “for an unspecified period of time” as the country tries to deal with growing public anger over the planned reopening of the South Korean market to U.S. beef. U.S. ambassador to South Korea, Alexander Vershbow, rejected calls for the beef trade deal worked out in April to be renegotiated. “We have said many times, we don’t see any need for renegotiation of the agreement since it is based on science,” Vershbow said. However, in a phone conversation Saturday, President Bush told President Lee Myung-bak that his administration would come up with “concrete measures” to prevent meat from older cattle from being shipped to Korea. “The government has requested the United States not to export any beef from cattle older than 30 months, which the people are most concerned about,” Agriculture Minister Chung Woon-chun said. Several U.S. meat packers announced last week that they’re willing to label shipments to South Korea with the age of the animals from which the beef originated. Meanwhile reports on Sunday from the S. Korean media state that President Lee’s entire cabinet, including Prime Minister Han Seung-soo, may soon resign over the situation, which once again erupted in violence over the weekend.



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## Researchers Develop New Live Test for CWD

Researchers from USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Colorado State University (CSU) recently completed their third year of evaluating and validating the first live rectal-tissue biopsy method for detecting chronic wasting disease (CWD) in captive and wild elk. To date, researchers have collected over 1,500 biopsies from captive elk in Colorado and used the technique to find 15 elk that were positive for CWD. As compared to proven post-mortem diagnostic tests, this live test appears to be nearly as accurate. “The key advantage to the rectal biopsy test is that it can be performed on live animals. Until now, there was no practical live test for CWD in elk,” said research wildlife biologist Dr. Kurt VerCauteren with APHIS’ Wildlife Services (WS) National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC). “With this technique we can detect CWD in animals not showing any signs of the disease and, thus, remove them so they are not left to infect other individuals and further contaminate the environment.” The research is a collaborative effort between APHIS’ WS and Veterinary Services programs, the Agricultural Research Service, and the Colorado State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. Several thousand animals have been killed in attempts to reduce the disease in the wild.

## Welcome, New Members!

SMA is proud to introduce our newest members:

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## Briefly . . .

FY 2009 Budget Does Not Include Proposed User Fees: The U.S. Senate passed the FY2009 budget resolution conference report last week, 48 - 45. It was approved last month by the House-Senate conference committee, and surpasses \$1 trillion in discretionary spending for FY 2009, a historical record. The bill does not include the Bush administration's proposed \$96 million in new user fees for meat, poultry, and egg products inspection programs. The House of Representatives is expected to vote on the measure later this week.

FSIS Posts First Quarterly Progress Report on *Salmonella* Testing: On June 6, FSIS posted to its website the first quarterly progress report on *Salmonella* testing of selected raw meat and poultry products. This quarterly report provides preliminary data for the months of January - March 2008. 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 results from individual *Salmonella* verification sample tests the agency regularly conducts at meat and poultry establishments to establishments that have asked to be informed of various tests. The quarterly report is available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Quarterly\\_Salmonella\\_Results/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Quarterly_Salmonella_Results/index.asp).

FSIS Offers Live Pod Casts: FSIS has a series of podcasts from April and May, titled "Food Safety of Meat, Poultry and Processed Egg Product Inspection," available on its website. The featured podcasts include: May 28 - Developing a Recall Plan; May 21 - Preventing Recalls; May 14 - Generic Labeling; May 7 - Features of a Label Sketch; April 30 - Federal Grant of Inspection Guide; April 23 - Food Safety Resources and Where to Find Them; April 23 - Small Plant News; and April 23 - askFSIS. This week's feature podcasts are: What to do if your product is recalled - Plant personnel can obtain some useful tips on steps to take during a product recall; and Be Food Safe - Clean - Learn the importance of keeping everything clean that comes in contact with food. To listen to these podcasts, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Food\\_Safety\\_at\\_Home\\_Podcasts/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Food_Safety_at_Home_Podcasts/index.asp). Subscriptions are also available.

CDC Investigates *Salmonella* Outbreak in Tomatoes: The U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) is collaborating with public health officials in several states, the Indian Health Service, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate a multistate outbreak of human *Salmonella* serotype Saintpaul infections. An epidemiologic investigation conducted by the NM and TX Departments of Health and the Indian Health Service using interviews comparing foods eaten by ill and well persons identified consumption of raw tomatoes as the likely source of the illnesses in New Mexico and Texas. While the specific type and source of tomatoes remain under investigation, preliminary data suggest that large tomatoes, including Roma and red round types are the source. Many retailers and restaurants have already removed tomatoes from stores and menus, although no definitive source has been named.

University of Arkansas Dedicates New Lab: On Thursday, the public is invited to the dedication of the Leland Tollett Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, which is operated by the University of Arkansas System's Division of Agriculture. Director Steve Breeding said the laboratory will provide disease diagnostic services and animal health monitoring programs for the poultry and livestock industries, veterinarians and the public. The 7,365-square-foot facility replaces an outdated lab in Springdale that has served the area since the early 1960s, and features a drive-up window as a convenience that will complement animal disease prevention programs.