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AMS Publishes Final Rule on Mandatory Livestock Reporting

The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued the final regulation to re-establish and revise the Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR) program last week. This rule facilitates open, transparent price discovery and provides all market participants, both large and small, with comparable levels of market information for cattle, swine, sheep, beef, and lamb meat. On April 2, 2001, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) implemented the LMR program as required by the Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act of 1999. The purpose of the 1999 Act was to establish a program of information regarding the marketing of cattle, swine, lambs, and the products of such livestock that provides information that can be readily understood by producers; improves the price and supply reporting services of USDA; and encourages competition in the marketplace for livestock and livestock products. The statutory authority for the program lapsed on September 30, 2005. At that time, AMS requested that all packers required to report under the 1999 Act continue to submit information voluntarily. Their cooperation has allowed USDA to publish most reports. In October 2006, Congress enacted legislation to reauthorize the 1999 Act through September 30, 2010 (Reauthorization Act), and to amend the swine reporting requirements of the 1999 Act. The Reauthorization Act separates the reporting requirements for sows and boars from barrows and gilts, among other changes. This rule re-establishes the regulatory authority for the program's continued operation. The rule incorporates the swine reporting changes contained within the Reauthorization Act, as well as enhances the program's overall effectiveness and efficiency based on AMS' experience in the administration of the program over the past six years. The final rule will become effective July 15, 2008. For more information about these regulations, visit the Livestock and Grain Market News website at www.ams.usda.gov/lsmnpubs/.

FSIS Takes Next Steps for *Salmonella* Initiative Program

FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice on January 28 that announced the *Salmonella* Initiative Program, an incentive program for meat and poultry slaughter establishments to control *Salmonella* in their operations. Establishments are encouraged to apply for the *Salmonella* Initiative Program, since the Agency will soon implement the program for establishments that do not have an existing waiver, such as provisions under the HACCP-based Inspection Models Project (HIMP) or for On-Line Reprocessing, and those plants that do not request additional inspection resources. The Agency will clarify timelines for establishments to inform FSIS of their participation in the program and will provide further information to establishments who choose not to participate. FSIS will also explain how the Agency will handle waivers for establishments that now operate under HIMP or On-Line Reprocessing. If those establishments wish to continue to operate under such waivers, they may do so as long as they also agree to comply with the program. Establishments that apply to participate in the program must agree to *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* (if applicable) and generic *Escherichia coli* sampling of their product as detailed for the *Salmonella* Initiative Program, to share its sampling data with FSIS, and to make the data available for copy or electronic transfer. An establishment is not required to be in FSIS performance Category 1 to be eligible for, or remain in the program. The Agency will review applications for the program as received, but will give priority to those establishments that are in Category 1. FSIS will publish a follow-up *Federal Register* notice in which the comment period will be re-opened on specific *Salmonella* Initiative Program issues for 60 days. More information will be made available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/Federal_Register_Publications_&Related_Documents/index.asp.

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FSIS Issues Notices on Agency Monitoring Systems

FSIS issued Notice 37-08 on May 15 titled, "Consumer Complaint Monitoring System (CCMS) 2.0." This notice announces the launch of a modified Consumer Complaint Monitoring System. Since 2001, FSIS has captured consumer complaints in an electronic database used to record, triage and track complaints regarding FSIS-regulated meat, poultry, and processed egg products. CCMS helps to identify and trace adulterated product in commerce and allows the Agency to respond to, and mitigate, possible food safety hazards. This modification was developed to address limitations of the original system and to improve the Agency's detection, analysis and response capabilities to consumer complaints. The agency also issued Notice 38-08 titled, "In-Commerce System and Administrative Enforcement Report System," on May 15. The purpose of this notice is to announce the release of the In-Commerce System and describe its features and uses. This new web-based system will be used by the Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review, Office of Field Operations and Office of International Affairs to document and report compliance and enforcement activities. Notices 37-08 and 38-08 are available on FSIS' website at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp.

FSIS Updates Salmonella Performance Results

The Agency began publishing results of completed sample sets from its *Salmonella* Verification Program for young chicken (broiler) slaughter establishments by their performance category on March 28, 2008. FSIS posts updated results on its website around the 15th of each month for young chicken slaughter establishments and will begin posting Category 2 and 3 establishments that slaughter market hogs and turkeys. The Agency has decided not to publish Category 2 establishments in a product class if 90 percent or more of its active or seasonal establishments are in Category 1 and none of its establishments is in Category 3. Publication of *Salmonella* sample set results for young chicken establishments was first presented in a *Federal Register* notice of February 27, 2006, and was recently described in detail within the January 28 *Federal Register* notice. For more information and to access the reports go to www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Salmonella_Verification_Testing_Program/index.asp.



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jarrod@sanangelopacking.com
or fax to 325-658-7272.**

Office Holiday

The SMA office will be closed next Monday,
May 26, 2008 in observance of



SMA wishes everyone a safe and happy
holiday weekend! InfoMeat will be
published on Tuesday.



**Plan Now to Attend SMA's 52nd Annual
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Briefly . . .

Congress Passes 2007 Farm Bill: Congress completed its work on the 2007 Farm Bill last week. The Senate passed the final conference report by a vote of 81 to 19, and sent it to President Bush for his signature. The House of Representatives earlier passed the bill by a vote of 318 to 106. The new Farm Bill contains language that clarifies and simplifies livestock record-keeping requirements for mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) and moves the grandfather date for domestic livestock in the COOL law from January 1, 2008 to July 15, 2008. It also includes a provision allowing meat processed at state-inspected plants to be shipped across state lines, which is currently permitted only for federally inspected facilities. While the President is expected to veto the bill, Congress appears to have sufficient support to override such action.

Sam Kane Beef Profiled in Industry Article: The May issue of *meetingplace* magazine features a story profiling SMA member Sam Kane Beef Processors, Inc., an industry pioneer in post-slaughter electrostimulation of beef carcasses. The "Tech Connection" article briefly backgrounds electrical stimulation technology and its benefits of improving grade and tenderness, hastening aging, and increasing shelf-life. Sam Kane's automated electrical bar stimulation system accommodates optimal line speeds and has been in use there for thirty years without major modification. "For us, the aging process is 10 days quicker, which is important because much of our beef comes to market way before 28 days," CEO Jerry Kane states in the article.

FSIS Offers *E. coli* Workshops in Houston, Philadelphia: As part of the initiative to enhance outreach to assist small and very small plants outlined in the FSIS strategic implementation plan, FSIS is holding a series of *E. coli* 0157:H7 outreach workshops. These sessions will cover Prerequisite Programs and FSIS Notices 65-07, 66-07 and 68-07. A workshop will be held Tuesday, June 10, 2008, 6:30 - 8:30 PM, at the Intercontinental Houston, 2222 West Loop in Houston, TX 77027. Another will be held Wednesday, June 25, 2008, 6:30 - 8:30 PM, at the Holiday Inn Historic District, 400 Arch St. in Philadelphia, PA 19106. To register online, access the forms at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp. Preregistration is recommended, but not required.