

# SMA InfoMeat

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## FSIS Issues Directive on High-Risk Imported Products

On September 10, 2008 USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued Directive 9030.1 titled, "Targeting for High-Risk Imported Product Shipments." This directive provides instructions to designated FSIS field personnel in the Office of International Affairs and the Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review as well as designated personnel in the Office of Food Defense and Emergency Response, for monitoring risk assigned to imported meat, poultry or processed egg product shipments by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection Automated Targeting System. This directive also provides inspectors instructions to re-inspect imported products that may pose elevated food defense concerns. To review this directive in detail, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/9030.1.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/9030.1.pdf).

## FSIS Schedules Public Meeting on Sampling Procedures

FSIS will host a one and a half day public meeting on October 14 and 15, 2008 to review its policies on sampling procedures, as well as those employed by non-FSIS entities, including the private sector. The primary purpose of the meeting is to deal with sampling issues associated with raw beef, particularly for *E. coli* O157:H7 as a first step. FSIS will also expand this meeting format to address other pathogens and species/products in the future. The Agency will also use this public meeting to gather input from all stakeholders on other sampling issues that need to be addressed. FSIS will compile these issues into a list of discussion topics for a future series of quarterly public meetings on sampling. More information on the location and an upcoming agenda will be available soon at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/meetings\\_&\\_events/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp).

## Canada Issues Statement on COOL

Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz issued a statement on September 8 as the Government of Canada tabled its official comments to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding its recently published interim final rule on implementation of the mandatory country-of-origin labelling (COOL). "The Government of Canada is disappointed the U.S. is moving forward with the COOL legislation," said Minister Ritz, according to PR Canada. "The possibility that this may discriminate against Canadian products is a concern, therefore, the Government of Canada is working with industry and the provinces and territories to minimize any impact on Canadian farmers and ranchers. Trade between Canada and the U.S. has tripled since the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, and then the North American Free Trade Agreement," Minister Ritz noted. "Reducing obstacles to trade has contributed to mutually-beneficial supply chains, making both countries more competitive domestically and internationally." The U.S. Congress passed the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) in June. This legislation requires the mandatory COOL rule for beef, lamb, pork, chicken and goat meat, along with perishable agricultural commodities, peanuts, pecans, ginseng and macadamia nuts, to be implemented by September 30, 2008. The implementation of the COOL rule for food products has happened in stages. Implementation for fish and shellfish was effective April 4, 2005. However, implementation for all other commodities was delayed until September 2008. As it did in 2003, 2005 and 2007, the Government of Canada has submitted comments to the U.S. *Federal Register*, outlining its views on the rule.

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**dmanhart@southsidemarket.com.**



## FSIS Issues Final Rule Revising Accredited Laboratory Program

Last Thursday the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced revised and consolidated standards and procedures for the accreditation of non-Federal analytical chemistry laboratories. Laboratories in the Accredited Laboratory Program (ALP) are accredited to analyze official meat and poultry samples for chemical residues and for moisture, protein, fat, and salt. FSIS is amending its current regulations to accommodate the adoption of newer methods for analyzing chemical residues and provide clarification. In addition, revisions will reflect Agency reorganizations and program changes, and improve the clarity and consistency of application for all laboratories participating in the ALP. The final rule will consolidate the current regulations to describe the conditions under which FSIS will revoke or suspend a laboratory's accreditation for reasons associated with violations of law. This rule will be effective Oct. 9, 2008.

## Public Meeting on Radiation Slated for Thursday

FSIS will hold a public meeting on Thursday, September 18 to communicate with stakeholders and receive public comments on what action it should take with respect to a petition from the American Meat Institute (AMI). The Agency received a petition from AMI in July 2005 to recognize the use of low penetration and low dose electron beam irradiation on the surface of chilled beef carcasses as a processing aid. A copy of the petition is available on FSIS' website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Petition\\_Carcass\\_Surface\\_Irrad.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Petition_Carcass_Surface_Irrad.pdf). In the petition, AMI argues that research studies demonstrate low dose irradiation in beef is exceptionally effective at reducing levels of *E. coli* O157:H7, does not produce significant losses of either macro- or micro-nutrients and does not have any effect on organoleptic properties, appearance or any lasting effects on shelf life. Based on research and information collected, as well as a positive evaluation of the safety of irradiation by the Food and Drug Administration, FSIS will consider data and information contained in the petition. The meeting will be held from 9 AM to 1 PM at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, D.C. To register and review an agenda for this meeting, visit the "Meetings and Events" page on FSIS' website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Meetings\\_&\\_Events/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Meetings_&_Events/index.asp).

## Does Your HACCP Plan Need An Update? Are You Ready for an FSIS EIAO 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, **November 6-7, 2008** 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. Workshop topics will include: flow chart review and evaluation, review and scientific support of hazard analysis, defending the selection of CCPs, supporting the selection of monitoring and verification frequencies, HACCP plan validation schemes, composing decision making documentation, and compiling supporting documentation. Registration information and course outline are available on our website.

**Sign up today!**

## Briefly . . .



**FSNS Names Belk Director of Scientific Affairs:** SMA member Food Safety Net Services (FSNS) recently announced that Dr. Keith Belk has been named Director of Scientific Affairs. Dr. Belk will have various responsibilities in his new role, such as providing technical troubleshooting for customers, performing facility audits, and conducting industry research. A professor in the Department of Animal Sciences at Colorado State University, Dr. Belk currently serves as the President-Elect for the American Meat Science Association and is active in many other industry organizations. He received his B.S. in Animal Science and M.S. in Meat Science from Colorado State University and his Ph.D. in Meat Science from Texas A&M University. His numerous years of experience in the food industry and educational experience will be a tremendous asset to FSNS and their customers.

**U.S. Beef Trade to Korea Progresses:** Approximately four-thousand tons of U.S. beef will likely hit the Korean market in the near future. More than 10-thousand tons has passed Korea's quarantine inspections. According to a quarantine official, Korean consumers can expect a sharp rise in the volume of U.S. beef products available. This week inspectors are taking a look at sanitary and quarantine conditions at 22 U.S. slaughterhouses and processing facilities that want to export meat to Korea. If the firms are granted export approval, the number of U.S. exporters granted permission to ship to South Korea will increase to 52.

**USDA Raises Beef Export Forecast:** USDA raised its beef export forecasts for both 2008 and 2009 based on strengthening exports to Asia. In its monthly World Supply and Demand Report, USDA forecast beef exports in 2008 at 1.841 billion pounds, up from 1.725 billion forecast in August and raised its 2009 export forecast to 2.06 billion from 1.915 billion in August. USDA left beef production forecasts unchanged for 2008, but said production would be slightly lower in the third quarter due to reduced steer and heifer slaughter that more than offsets increased cow slaughter, while increased cow slaughter in the fourth quarter is expected to result in slightly more beef production in that quarter. Cattle price forecasts for both 2008 and 2009 were raised to reflect current strength in demand and relatively tight supplies. (*Janie Gabbett, meetingplace.com, 9/12/08*)

**Researchers Examine Genetic Causes for BSE:** New findings about the causes of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) show that some cases may be genetic. “We now know it's also in the genes of cattle,” said Juergen A. Richt, regents distinguished professor of diagnostic medicine and pathobiology at Kansas State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. His team's new findings suggest BSE is also caused by a genetic mutation within a gene called Prion Protein Gene. Prion proteins are expressed abundantly in the brain and immune cells of mammals. The research showed that a 10-year-old cow from Alabama with an atypical form of BSE had the same type of prion protein gene mutation found in human patients with the genetic form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD). “Our findings that there is a genetic component to BSE are significant because they tell you we can have this disease everywhere in the world, even in so-called BSE-free countries,” Richt said. He said BSE caused by genetics is extremely rare, and a recent epidemiological study estimated that the mutation affects less than 1 in 2,000 cattle. Richt and colleague, Mark Hall, of the National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa, published their findings online in an article in the journal *PLoS Pathogens*. (*Keith Nunes, MEATPOULTRY.com, 9/15/08*)

**Slaughter Plant to Reopen:** The former Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing plant in Chino, CA may have a buyer. Arizona livestock broker and rancher Marvin Roberts, president and CEO of Phoenix-based Roberts Enterprises, reportedly plans to launch a new slaughterhouse and processing operation this month under a new company. American Beef Packers Inc. will specialize in cull cows for the manufacturing beef trade and will start production of 500 cows a day in the coming weeks, employing some 250 people. Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co. ceased trading in February after suffering the largest beef recall in history due to alleged acts of cruelty to cattle.