

# SMA InfoMeat

1957

Representing the Meat Industry for Over 50 Years

2008

September 29, 2008  
Volume 35, Issue 13

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## FSIS Issues Notice on Exclusions from *Salmonella* Testing

On September 25, 2008, FSIS issued Notice 66-08, "Raw Product Destined for Ready-To-Eat Product Excluded From *Salmonella* Testing." This is the first Notice to expressly reference the January 28, 2008, *Federal Register* Notice dealing with the agency's *Salmonella* Initiative Program (SIP). In that document, FSIS indicated its intention to exclude product from the agency's *Salmonella* testing if all product in the product class (e.g., carcass or ground) were used in ready-to-eat RTE products produced under inspection. According to the Notice, if the establishment either: (1) processes all raw product in a product class into RTE or (2) sends all raw product in a product class to a federally-inspected establishment for further processing into an RTE product, FSIS will not conduct *Salmonella* testing on that raw product at the producing establishment. The Notice is very clear – all product in the product class must be processed into RTE. If even one downstream customer fails to process the product into RTE, the producing establishment will not be excluded from agency *Salmonella* testing. Moreover, if only some, but not all of the product is going to non-RTE, all product in that product class is subject to sampling, even if a particular product sampled was intended for further processing into RTE. It should be noted that it is possible for an establishment to exclude one product class, but not all. For example, if a beef slaughter establishment sends all its raw ground product to RTE, the ground would be excluded from agency *Salmonella* sampling. However, if the establishment processes/sells other parts of the carcass (e.g., sub-primals) for raw use, the carcasses would remain subject to the agency's *Salmonella* testing. The Notice also includes implementation instructions for inspection personnel. For a detailed summary of the Notice by SMA legal counsel Olsson, Frank & Weeda, P.C., email [phyllis@southwestmeat.org](mailto:phyllis@southwestmeat.org). The Notice is available online at [www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/66-08.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/66-08.pdf).

## Bush Designates Johnson upon Raymond's Retirement

Dr. Richard Raymond, USDA's Undersecretary for Food Safety, has announced plans to retire on October 1, 2008. Raymond has been in charge of FSIS since July 2005. "Dr. Raymond has maintained his decency, humility and caring from his days as a country doctor and Nebraska Chief Medical Officer throughout his responsibilities here at USDA to direct actions that prevent disease and promote the quality and safety of the food we eat," said Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schafer. Schafer announced that President Bush has designated Elizabeth Johnson as acting Undersecretary of Food Safety. Johnson, who joined USDA in 2002, has served as Chief Assistant to Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Conner for the past three years. "Beth Johnson steps up to the challenge, highly regarded for her commitment and my confidence in her ability to marshal the resources of dedicated people and considerable scientific research for inspection and food safety," said Schafer. A registered dietitian, Beth Johnson joined USDA in 2002, having served more than a decade advising government and the private sector on the subjects of nutrition, farm credit and livestock. Her previous government experience includes positions at the Food and Drug Administration as a nutritionist for the food labeling division and as a research dietitian at the USDA Agricultural Research Service. A native of Madison, Indiana, Johnson holds a Master of Science degree in Nutrition from the University of Maryland and a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics from Ball State University. She and her husband, Bill, have two daughters, Sara and Hanah.

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Southside Market & BBQ, Inc. is looking for a **Plant Manager**.

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### FSIS Releases New Podcasts

This month, FSIS released the following new podcasts helpful to plant operators and owners:

- September 3 - Designing a HACCP Plan - Part 8  
Learn about the sixth HACCP principle - Establishing record keeping procedures.
- September 10 - Designing a HACCP Plan - Part 9  
Learn about the seventh HACCP principle - Establishing verification procedures.
- September 17 - Designing a HACCP Plan - Part 10  
Find out about the common pitfalls when designing a HACCP plan, how to overcome them and sources for more information.
- September 24 - What Is Avian Influenza and How Is FSIS Preparing for It?  
Learn about Avian Influenza and what FSIS is doing to prepare for an outbreak within the United States.  
Check out these new podcasts on FSIS' website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Food\\_Safety\\_Inspection\\_Podcasts/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Food_Safety_Inspection_Podcasts/index.asp).



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**Welcome, New Member!**

SMA is proud to introduce our newest member:

**Plains Meat Co.**

PO Box 922 • Lubbock, TX 79408  
Phone: 806-765-5595 • Fax: 806-765-0445

Howard Griffin, Owner • Greg Weaver, HACCP  
Coordinator • Brandon Adams, Food Safety Coordinator

*Services: Processor, portion control, quick freeze, grinder  
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**Does Your HACCP Plan Need An Update?  
Are You Ready for an FSIS EIAO Review?**

Register for "Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement  
Workshop for Raw and Cooked Product Operations,"  
hosted by SMA, NMA, and the TAMU Dept. 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 & evaluation, review and scientific support of hazard analysis, defending the selection of CCPs, supporting monitoring and verification frequencies, HACCP plan validation schemes, compiling decision making & supporting documentation. Registration information and course outline are available on our website.

**Sign up today!**

**Briefly . . .**

FSIS Hosts Public Meeting on *E. coli* Sampling: SMA President/CEO Dr. Joe Harris will attend a public meeting on October 14 and 15 regarding control of *E. coli* O157:H7. This one-and-a-half day public meeting will address uniformity and consistency of sampling methodology for *E. coli* O157:H7, both by industry and FSIS. FSIS will also address *E. coli* O157:H7 compliance guidelines and will also use the meeting to gather input from stakeholders on other *E. coli* O157:H7 control issues that need to be addressed which will be compiled into a list of discussion topics for future public meetings. The meeting will be held at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, D.C. An agenda will soon be posted at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/meetings\\_&\\_events/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp).

AMS Updates Q&As for COOL: In response to the concerns raised by a group of 31 senators, Ag Secretary Ed Schafer has instructed AMS to modify its position on some key elements of country of origin labeling (COOL). AMS staff has updated Q&A's that were posted on its website Friday. Specifically, there are two Q&As that deal with identifying product of mixed origin and further definitions for who must comply with COOL. COOL applies ONLY to retailers as defined by the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act of 1930. Access the new Q&A at [www.ams.usda.gov/cool](http://www.ams.usda.gov/cool). AMS will hold two more informational sessions about COOL for covered commodities sold at retail. These sessions will provide detailed information about the COOL program to growers, packers, suppliers, handlers, retailers, consumers and other interested parties: October 7 - Minneapolis, MN, 1:30 - 4:30 PM (CT), at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, 20800 Kenrick Avenue in Lakeville, MN 55044; and October 9 -- Los Angeles, CA, 1:30 - 4:30 PM (PT) at the Marriott Renaissance Montura Hotel Los Angeles Airport, 9620 Airport Blvd. in Los Angeles, CA 90045.

FSIS Posts Compliance Guideline for State Cooperative Meat/Poultry Inspection Programs: The Agency has posted a compliance guideline for State Cooperative Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs, written to clarify standards that FSIS uses in its annual review. Specifically, the compliance guideline focuses on nine components that determine whether MPIs are operating in a manner that is "at least equal to" the Federal inspection programs. FSIS is requesting comments on the document and will consider any suggestions or comments received during the 30-day comment period. If appropriate, FSIS will revise the document based on the comments received. The compliance guideline is available on the FSIS website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/At\\_Least\\_Equal\\_to\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/At_Least_Equal_to_Guidelines.pdf). Comments must be submitted on or before October 27. Stakeholders are encouraged to submit their comments to the Office of Policy and Program Development, Policy Issuances Division at [FSISGuidanceDocumentComments@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:FSISGuidanceDocumentComments@fsis.usda.gov).

APHIS Releases Plan for Animal Disease Traceability: Last week, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) released the official version of its Business Plan to Advance Animal Disease Traceability. The plan provides benchmarks to guide the National Animal Identification System's progress towards the long-term goal of 48-hour traceback of affected or exposed animals in the event of an animal disease outbreak. It also takes a comprehensive look at the country's current traceability status, including a breakdown by species and details seven strategies that will provide the greatest amount of traceability progress where it is needed the most. Access the plan at: [http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/documents/plans\\_reports/TraceabilityBusinessPlan%20Ver%201.0%20Sept%202008.pdf](http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/documents/plans_reports/TraceabilityBusinessPlan%20Ver%201.0%20Sept%202008.pdf).

CEO of NCBA Announces Resignation: Terry Stokes, CEO of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), announced that he will resign his position following the 2009 Cattle Industry Convention in January. Stokes said representing cattlemen and championing their cause has been the greatest honor and the most fulfilling job of his career, but that it also is all-consuming. He is looking forward to spending time with family and exploring new opportunities. Stokes joined NCBA in 1996 as chief financial officer, and was appointed CEO in 2002.