



InfoMeat

June 5, 2006
Volume 26, Issue 10

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Internet website: <http://www.southwestmeat.org>

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FSIS Updates Directive on Verifying Food Safety Systems

FSIS re-issued Directive 5000.1, Revision 2 on June 1, to provide comprehensive direction to consumer safety inspectors (CSIs) on how they are to protect the public health by properly verifying an establishment's compliance with pathogen reduction, sanitation and HACCP regulations. The directive titled, Verifying an Establishment's Food Safety System, has been rewritten to include only verification instructions for CSIs that were included in the directive's accompanying handbook. This revision is necessary because the earlier version provided instructions to consumer safety officers, now called enforcement, investigation and analysis officers (EIAOs). Instructions for EIAOs can be found in the 5100 series of directives. FSIS Directive 5000.1, Revision 2 is available on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/5000.1_Rev2.pdf. For a detailed summary of the revised Directive by SMA legal counsel Olsson, Frank, and Weeda, P.C., please email Phyllis at sma@tca.net.

FSIS Announces Initiative to Help Small, Very Small Plants

Last Tuesday, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced a groundbreaking initiative to provide the assistance necessary for small and very small plant owners to further improve their establishments' food safety programs. "As part of our commitment to ensure food safety at all of our nation's plants, FSIS held a national series of listening sessions and has identified innovative ways for small and very small establishments to fully benefit from our safety program that is responsible for dramatic reductions in foodborne illness," said USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard Raymond. "We will continue to enhance our outreach efforts to these plants and enlist our partners to ensure critical training, access to food safety experts and information resources are available in a format that's uniform, easily accessible and consistent." The FSIS initiative also offers the opportunity for increased interagency collaboration. Through enhanced outreach efforts, FSIS will make plant owners and operators aware of loan programs available through USDA's Rural Business and Cooperative programs. Joining Raymond and other dignitaries at the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) ceremony in College Station, site of an FSIS training activity, was USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas Dorr. "Plant owners, working through lenders, will be able to obtain loan guarantees, making it easier for them to gain access to commercial credit in order to upgrade facilities or equipment, which will further enhance food safety," Dorr said. "This initiative is a good example of USDA agencies working together to better serve the needs of consumers and industry." The program will feature a toll free number and webpage to assist small plants and better access to technical resources, including scientific validation materials and education and training information, delivered in new and innovative ways. Partnerships with industry, academia, consumers, federal, State, and international public health partners will be expanded and better leveraged. FSIS will assess the needs of the small and very small plants as well as evaluate the effectiveness of Agency programs designed to assist them, on a continuing basis. Additional aspects of the program will include utilizing FSIS employees to meet proactively with small and very small plants to get more details about their specific needs and provide joint training sessions for small and very small plants and FSIS employees.

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Risk-Based Inspection System Moves Forward

FSIS recently announced plans to begin development of a risk-based inspection system (RBIS). Resolve, Inc. has been named the third party contractor who will begin gathering information from all interested parties including industry, inspection personnel, consumer advocacy groups, and others. This information will be used to develop RBIS. At May's National Advisory Committee for Meat and Poultry Inspection and joint industry-consumer meetings held in Washington, DC, FSIS discussed its current thinking and plans for RBIS. At this time, RBIS will be discussed for combination (slaughter and processing) and for processing facilities, but not for egg or slaughter-only facilities. RBIS will be used to align FSIS's resources with level the level of risk based on: hazards of species and process, likelihood of hazard, exposure potential, and risk control effectiveness. All plants will still receive once daily inspection as required by law. Reports and presentations from the NACMPI meeting can be viewed at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/National_Advisory_Committee_on_Meat_&_Poultry/index.asp.

FSIS Plans New Directives, Notices

FSIS publishes directives and notices to enable the agency to carry out its mission of protecting public health. Within the next month, FSIS expects to issue the following Directives:

- 6000.1, Revision 1 - Responsibilities Related to Foreign Animal Diseases (FADs). This directive provides public health veterinarians (PHVs) instructions to follow when they suspect that animals may have FADs, or when they observe symptoms of FADs or other reportable conditions. This directive is being revised to update the lists of reportable diseases and add lagomorph (rabbits) diseases.
- 10,220.4 - Using the FAST Antimicrobial Screen Test (FAST) to Detect Antimicrobial Drug Residues in Cattle and Swine. This directive is being issued to replace the Swab Test on Premises (STOP) in swine slaughter establishments. FAST is the preferred in-plant screen test for any slaughter class of swine or cattle. This directive also clarifies FSIS policies regarding the use of in-plant residue screening tests for the detection of antimicrobial drug residues in cattle and swine.
- 12,600.1 - Voluntary Reimbursable Inspection Services (Fee-for-Service). This directive describes voluntary reimbursable inspection services available to facilities such as warehouses, cold storage facilities and off-premises freezers.

FSIS also intends to issues notices on: *(Numbers are assigned as notices are issued.)*

- Certification of Intestines or Animal Casings for Export - This notice provides instructions to inspection program personnel regarding intestines and casings from animals that are eligible to receive marks of inspection and be certified for export.

Watch future issues of *InfoMeat* for more information on these Directives and Notices.

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FSIS Updates Listeria Compliance Guidelines, Q&As

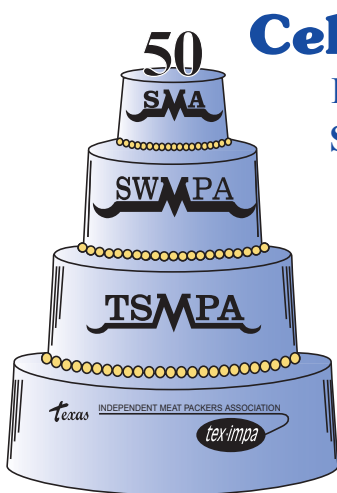
The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has posted the following updated versions of documents related to the control of *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*): Updated "Compliance Guidelines to Control *Listeria monocytogenes* in Post-Lethality Exposed Ready-To-Eat Meat and Poultry Products," available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/oppde/rdad/FRPubs/97-013F/LM_Rule_Compliance_Guidelines_May_2006.pdf; Updated "Questions and Answers for the Interim Final Rule, Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-To-Eat Meat and Poultry Products," available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/10240.4/resource_3.pdf; and Final "Procedures for the Evaluation of Establishment Control Programs for *Listeria monocytogenes*" available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/LM_checklist_guidelines.pdf. This is the second update to the *Lm* guidelines. Each update is in response to questions and comments received by FSIS. This update includes documents generated as a result of the Phase 1 activities for the risk-based verification for the *Lm* rule codified at 9 C.F.R. § 430. Updates and revisions to the Compliance Guidelines are shown in a different color and different font in the FSIS website posting and changes are summarized on pages four and five of the guidelines. New questions and answers (Q&As) have been added to four sections as well as a new section entitled "Ready-To-Eat Post-Lethality Exposed Products." For a detailed summary of the updated *Lm* documents by SMA legal counsel Olsson, Frank, and Weeda, P.C., please email Phyllis at sma@tca.net.

Briefly . . .

FMD Spreads in Vietnam: The number of Vietnamese localities stricken by foot-and-mouth disease has increased to 40, after the disease outbreaks have been detected in southern Binh Duong province, according to a local animal health agency. Vietnam is intensifying control over cattle transport and trade in affected areas, and surveillance of the disease and vaccination of healthy animals. The disease has jumped to 462 communes in the 40 cities and provinces nationwide, hitting nearly 13,200 bulls and buffaloes, and about 2,100 pigs, the department said, noting that over 17,500 pigs and roughly 300 buffaloes and bulls have either died or been culled due to the outbreaks.

Korea Sets Date To Lift Beef Ban: The South Korean government announced that beef shipments from the United States will begin on June 7, when it publishes a list of beef plants approved to export boneless beef from cattle under 30 months of age. The U.S. continues to push Seoul about the boneless beef issue, maintaining that most bones present no risk to human health. Before S. Korea banned U.S. beef in 2003, Korean bone-in short ribs made up a significant portion of U.S. beef imports.

NPPC Kicks Off World Pork Expo: The National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) presents the 2006 World Pork Expo June 8-10 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds, Des Moines, Iowa, USA. Now in its 18th year, the World Pork Expo will feature some 500 swine industry exhibitors, educational seminars and a Marketing Information Center, as well as a new Environmental Center and Job Fair/Career Center. For more information, visit www.worldpork.org/.



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Register now to attend our 50th Annual Convention and Suppliers' Showcase, July 19-22, 2006 at the scenic Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort & Spa in San Antonio!
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Thanks to the amazing response to our 50th Annual Convention, our room block at the Hyatt is very nearly or completely sold out. We have made arrangements for additional rooms at the Radisson Hill Country Resort and Spa (www.radisson.com/sanantoniotx_resort), which is right next door to the Hyatt. We have blocked rooms at the special rate of \$185 + tax. Individuals should contact the hotel at (210) 509-9800, or through their toll free number at 800-333-3333 and ask for the Southwest Meat Association. The Hotel will honor reservations received by Tuesday, June 27, 2006. Reservations received after

this date are subject to space availability and at prevailing room rates. While we anticipated a larger than normal turnout for the convention this year and blocked rooms accordingly, the number of attendees has simply been overwhelming.