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FSIS Issues Notice on Use of Non-amenable Animal Tissues

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has issued FSIS Notice 15-06 "Use of Non-amenable Animal Tissue in Inspected Products." This notice provides clarification to inspection program personnel regarding the use of non-amenable animal tissues in inspected products and cancels any previous instructions regarding this issue. "Non-amenable animal tissue" refers to tissues of animals not subject to inspection under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) or the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA). This includes edible tissues from exotic animals such as elk, deer, rabbits, migratory fowl, game birds, and other animals not under the scope of voluntary inspection, such as alligators and kangaroos. In the past, FSIS policy for use was that the tissues "had to originate from one of three recognized approved sources" that were either FSIS voluntarily inspected, state inspected, or foreign government inspected. After reexamination, FSIS has concluded that these tissues do not need to bear a mark of inspection (Federal, State, or Non-domestic) to be included in amenable meat or poultry products produced in official establishments. They may be used in accordance with 9 C.F.R. §§ 318.1(c), 318.6(a) and 424.21(a)(1) which apply to the use of all "ingredients" coming into an official establishment such as salt or cheese for use "in the preparation of meat food products." Inspection program personnel are to "verify the proper use of non-inspected non-amenable animal tissue in the same manner that they verify the use of all ingredients" which are covered by these regulations. While these "non-amenable animal tissues" may move freely in an official establishment and be used in amenable products, this is still not the case for "meat, meat by-products, and meat food products bearing official marks showing that they were inspected and passed under State inspection..." State-inspected "amenable" products must still be "stored separately and apart from the federally inspected products in the official establishment," and must not "result in adulteration of any products at the official establishment..." This notice is available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Notice_15-06/index.asp.

FSIS Reissues Directive Clarifying Use of Photographs

FSIS re-issued Directive 5100.3 on March 7 to provide clarification regarding the use of photographs for the purpose of exhibits in an administrative enforcement report. The directive titled, Administrative Enforcement Reporting (AER) System, explains when and how FSIS Form 5400-9, Administrative Enforcement Report, is used and sets out which exhibits enforcement investigative and analysis officers should compile to support the different actions covered by the AER. The directive states that in compiling an AER file, it may be necessary for OFO personnel (e.g., EIAOs) who have been trained and issued a camera by FSIS to take photographs that document the existence of insanitary conditions that are causing, or are likely to cause, the adulteration of product or of practices likely to render product injurious to health or otherwise violative. At no time are OFO personnel to take photographs if they have not been trained by FSIS, have not been authorized by supervisory personnel to take photographs, and have not been issued a camera by FSIS. Also, under no circumstances are non-FSIS issued cameras (e.g., cell phone camera, personal cameras) to be used to take photographs in an inspected establishment. The purpose of photographic evidence is to provide a visual documentation of the facts, conditions, or the sequence of events, and to provide visual support that there was a problem or violation of the law. This directive is available on FSIS' website at www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/5100.3Rev1.pdf.

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APHIS Confirms Another Positive BSE Case

Today Dr. John Clifford, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's chief veterinary medical officer, announced the discovery of another positive case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the U.S. The animal, an older cow that was euthanized on an Alabama farm, had tested inconclusive on Friday. "We are now working with Alabama animal health officials to conduct an epidemiological investigation to gather any further information we can on the herd of origin of this animal. The animal had only resided on the most recent farm in Alabama for less than a year," said Clifford. "We will be working to locate animals from this cow's birth cohort (animals born in the same herd within one year of the affected animal) and any offspring. We will also work with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials to determine any feed history that may be relevant to the investigation. Experience worldwide has shown us that it is highly unusual to find BSE in more than one animal in a herd or in an affected animal's offspring. Nevertheless, all animals of interest will be tested for BSE." According to the attending veterinarian, the cow was quite possibly upwards of 10 years of age, based on dentition. This would indicate that this animal was born prior to the implementation of the FDA's 1997 ruminant feed ban.

**Does Your HACCP Plan Need
An Update? Are You Ready
for an FSIS Team 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, April 6-7, 2006 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. Registration information and course outline are available on our website.

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Briefly . . .

FSIS Delays Implementation of EV Program Instructions: USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has released Notice 16-06, "Delay of Implementation of Instructions for Certifying Beef Products Under Export Verification (EV) Programs." This announces a temporary delay in the implementation of some of the instructions in FSIS Notice 09-06, "Certifying Beef Products Under Export Verification (EV) Programs." These instructions relate to the Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) letter of confirmation regarding eligibility of the shipment for the country listed on the export application and export certificate. The establishment will not need to have a letter from AMS that it has met the EV program requirements and its product is eligible for export. This requirement will be delayed until April 1, 2006. Until that time, however, inspection program personnel will rely on the posted "list of eligible plants and products." FSIS will issue a new notice by April 1, to provide instructions related to verifying EV programs and to cancel Notice 9-06 and 16-06. Notice 16-06 may be viewed at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/16-06.pdf.

FSIS Technology Updates Published Online: On February 28, FSIS published its table of "Food Safety Technologies Applicable for Small and Very Small Plants - FY 2003" and its "New Technology Information Table." Both sites provide valuable information on new applications, equipment, substances, methods, processes or procedures affecting the safety of meat products. Access the websites at: www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Technologies_Applicable_for_Small_Very_Small_Plants_FY2003/index.asp and www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/New_Technology_Table_Feb_06/index.asp, respectively.

Malaysia Lifts Beef Ban: Malaysia has lifted a ban on U.S. beef imports in place for more than two years, to make up for a shortage after it restricted access to Australian and New Zealand beef. Agriculture Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said that veterinary and Islamic religious department officials had inspected meat from the two U.S. establishments and deemed it free of disease and pronounced it halal, or prepared according to Islamic requirements. Beef exports will be limited to animals under 30 months old.

MAP Packaging Amendment Defeated: An amendment that would have made carbon monoxide packaging for meat illegal was defeated last week in the House Committee on Rules. NCBA, along with other industry groups, worked to defeat the amendment introduced by Rep. Bart Stupak (D-MI) during House consideration of the National Uniformity for Food Act of 2005. The controversy began when Kalsec, Incorporated, the maker of an herbal meat

preservative product petitioned FDA to revoke the use of carbon monoxide last year. After a thorough review process, FDA declared carbon monoxide safe for use in modified atmosphere packaging. FDA has reviewed the use of carbon monoxide in packaging four times since the early 1980s and, on every occasion, determined it to be Generally Regarded as Safe (GRAS). FDA has not said when it will rule on Kalsec's petition.

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Advance Food Company of Enid, OK is currently recruiting for the following positions:

- **Food Safety Director** - Masters degree required with five years of managerial experience.
- **Food Safety Manager** - BS with a minimum of 5-7 years of managerial experience.
- **Food Safety Supervisor** - both RTE and raw facilities - entry level - BS with no experience required.
- **Process Project Engineer** - Degree in engineering required.
- **Sanitation Director** - oversee sanitation program for all facilities.

Interested parties should e-mail their resume to: Careers@advf.com or contact Nancy Correa at 580-213-4122.