

# SMA InfoMeat

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## FSIS to Install Satellite Dishes at Some Establishments

On Friday the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) published a Notice in the *Federal Register* to “inform federally-inspected meat and poultry establishments that the Agency has determined that, under certain circumstances, the installation of a satellite dish on establishment premises by the Agency is essential to the efficient conduct of inspection.” This will require certain establishments to provide space on their premises to FSIS for the installation of a satellite dish. This Notice was effective on October 3, 2006. The Agency has determined that inspection personnel must have high-speed Internet access to “more efficiently and effectively perform their duties.” Therefore, the Agency intends to use satellite technology in approximately 2000 establishments where other means of high-speed access is not available or satellite technology is the most economical means of providing high-speed Internet access. FSIS will notify the specific establishments where it intends to install a satellite dish on the establishment’s premises. The *Federal Register* Notice may be viewed at: [www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2006-0026.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2006-0026.pdf).

## USDA Agrees to Change Cattle Price Reporting

In a move that will provide more accurate pricing information for cattle producers, the USDA will begin accepting feeder cattle prices reported on a delivered basis with a freight adjustment. The delivered basis transactions will be included with those already being collected and reported on a free on board (F.O.B.) basis, and will be eligible for inclusion in the CME Feeder Cattle Index™. This reporting change comes in response to concerns expressed by producer-members of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) regarding the low volume of animals that were being used for calculation of the Index. USDA limitations on the types of cattle sales eligible for inclusion in its reports were identified as a major contributing factor to this situation. “This alteration will enhance the transparency and effectiveness of the Index by allowing producers who receive feeder cattle on a ‘delivered’ basis to convert the price paid to a F.O.B. price by subtracting out the transport costs they incurred,” said Jason Jordan, manager of legislative affairs for NCBA. The Index serves as a valuable risk management tool for producers and is based on feeder cattle prices collected and reported from a 12-state region by USDA. The accuracy of the Index depends upon a sufficient number of animals being included in the calculation. However, in recent years it had become clear that the current reporting parameters limited the volume of reportable sales such that the validity of the Index was in question, especially during fall months. NCBA collaborated with key officials from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and USDA to identify changes that would facilitate a higher volume for calculation of the Index. Specifically, delivered-basis transactions may be converted to an F.O.B basis by the buyer or seller, and reported by telephone, e-mail or facsimile. In order to ensure accurate reporting, the following stipulations apply: all cattle sales must originate in the 12-state region; producers must provide transaction information on a consistent basis to be included; the buyer or seller must convert the price from delivered to F.O.B. and provide Market News with both prices; origin point of the cattle must be provided; names of the buyer and seller must be provided; and documentation must be provided to USDA upon request. As producers report these delivered transactions, USDA will compile the information and make it publicly available for a period of time in order to illustrate the impact of this alteration before including delivered transactions in its reports. Also, understanding that cattle are often sold on even weights, USDA will begin including 850 lb. animals in the 800-849 lb. weight category. (NCBA News, 10/3/06)

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## Ground Beef Calculator Generates Custom Nutrient Profiles

A broiled hamburger patty that's 80% lean and 20% fat has 20 grams of protein in it - but how much protein would the same-sized patty have if it were 94% lean and only 6% fat? Solving this puzzle would have been a problem in the past, but not today. A new computer program, the Ground Beef Calculator, is now available online free of charge at the Agricultural Research Service's Nutrient Data Laboratory (NDL) web site. ARS is the chief scientific research agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Ground beef is the most commonly consumed beef product in the United States. It is offered in retail stores at differing fat levels and can be prepared in various ways. The calculator program generates a custom nutrient profile for a variety of ground beef products containing any fat level between 5% and 30%. Estimates for most vitamins and minerals and the major fatty acid classes are also calculated automatically, based on chemical analyses and mathematical equations. Users simply type in the percent fat or lean of any one of five product types: raw ground beef, broiled patty, pan-broiled patty, pan-browned crumbles or baked loaf. The nutrient profiles generated can then be printed directly from the web page. The calculator was produced by ARS lead nutritionist Juliette C. Howe and colleagues at the NDL, which is part of the Beltsville (MD) Human Nutrition Research Center. They collaborated with researcher Dennis R. Buege with the University of Wisconsin, and statistician Larry A. Douglass with the University of Maryland. To access the Ground Beef Calculator, go to [www.ars.usda.gov/nutrientdata/GroundBeefCalculator](http://www.ars.usda.gov/nutrientdata/GroundBeefCalculator). The computer program also can be accessed through the online search feature of the USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (SR), which has recently been updated with the launch of version SR19. The NDL produces and manages the Standard Reference for public use. The calculator allows consumers, dietitians and researchers to estimate dietary nutrient intakes based on ground beef products available in the marketplace. Industry may also use the nutrient information generated by the program to meet labeling requirements for their products containing ground beef. (Rosalie Marion Bliss, ARS News, 10/6/06)

## New Technologies Detect, Eradicate Food-borne Pathogens

Purdue University researchers are developing two technologies that may be able to prevent future food-borne illness. Together, these technologies rapidly detect and eradicate food-borne pathogens. The first method uses a laser to detect and identify many types of bacteria, and is about three times faster and one-tenth as expensive as current technology. A second innovation uses chlorine dioxide gas to kill pathogens on produce, fresh fruits and vegetables. "This would be a large step up from current technologies, which mainly involve washing and scrubbing, and cannot completely rid a product of a pathogen like *E. coli*," said Richard Linton, a professor of food science. "We can use the laser technology to detect problems more quickly, determine exactly what the pathogen is and where it came from," Linton said. "As for using this gas as a disinfectant, I would say that in my 13 years of doing research, it is 10,000 to 100,000 times more effective than any process I have seen." While different in nature, the methods have the common goal of keeping food safe and preventing people from getting sick, and have each progressed to the point where they could be commercialized, Linton said. Patents are pending on both technologies, and the laser technology is available for licensing. Arun Bhunia, also a professor of food science, leads the team that developed the laser-based technology, called "Bacteria Rapid Detection Using Optical Scattering Technology." The process works by shining a laser through a petri dish containing bacterial colonies. A computer program determines the type of bacteria by analyzing how light is refracted—a unique "scatter pattern." Bhunia has shown his technology is capable of recognizing *Listeria monocytogenes*, a microbial pathogen that is a leading cause of food-borne illness. Industry has shown interest in Bhunia's technology, as well as the chlorine dioxide work done by Linton and the project's co-leader, Mark Morgan, a professor of food science. "We are currently working on an industrial tunnel system to apply the gas to produce," Morgan said. His team is also investigating using the gas to sterilize processing equipment. Previous results have shown the gas to be highly effective at killing microbial pathogens. The largest obstacle remaining is optimizing the system to dispense the appropriate amount of chlorine dioxide, Morgan said. Enough of the gas must be deployed to kill the pathogens, but too much can cause a decrease of quality in the product, such as browning of leafy greens. Both technologies have the potential to help prevent food-borne illness, Linton said, but he also noted that following proper agricultural practices is as important, if not more important, for food safety. Bhunia's technology is further described in an article published last summer in the *Journal of Biomedical Optics*. Linton and Morgan have been working with chlorine dioxide for years, and have several published studies, one of which appeared in the *Journal of Food Protection* in 2004.

## Briefly . . .

FSIS to Hold Regulatory Education Sessions for Small, Very Small Plants: FSIS will hold regulatory education sessions on October 18 for the owners and operators of small and very small plants in California and North Carolina. The sessions will cover a regulatory walk-through of sanitation standard operating procedures and the hazard analysis and critical control point and rules of practice regulations. The regulatory education sessions will be held at the following locations: October 18, from 5 - 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Sacramento Northeast, 5321 Date Avenue, Sacramento, CA; October 18, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Raleigh Capital Center Hotel, 421 South Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC. To register by phone, call 800-336-3747. Online registration forms and information about upcoming sessions can be found at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Outreach\\_Sessions\\_SVS\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp). Additional regulatory education sessions will be held on October 24 in Jackson, MS, and Denver, CO.

FSIS Amends Directive on Safe, Suitable Ingredients: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has issued the 9th amendment to FSIS Directive 7120.1, "Safe and Suitable Ingredients Used in the Production of Meat and Poultry Products." Attachment 1 of the Directive "identifies the substances that have been approved in 21 CFR for use in meat and poultry products as food additives, approved in GRAS notices and pre-market notifications, and approved in letters conveying acceptability determinations." Substances which have been added since the last amendment to this Directive on July 7, 2006 appear in bold. The Directive and amendment 9 may be viewed at: [www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/7120.1Amend9.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/7120.1Amend9.pdf).

FSIS Issues Q&A on Export Certification: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has issued Notice 65-06, "Availability of Questions and Answers Export Certification" which "provides answers to questions FSIS personnel have raised" regarding the following Directives and Notices which address the export process:

1. FSIS Directive 9000.1, Revision 1, "Export Certification;"
2. FSIS Directive 9040.1, Revision 3, "Reinspection of Product Intended for Export;"
3. FSIS Notice 19-06, "Revised Notice for Certifying Products Under Export Verification (EV) Programs;" and
4. FSIS Notice 10-06, "Certifying Beef Products To Be Exported to Japan for United States (U.S.) Military Use."

This Notice may be viewed at: [www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/65-06.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/65-06.pdf).

APHIS Requests Nominations for NPIP: The Secretary of Agriculture is soliciting nominations for the election of regional membership and a member-at-large for the General Conference Committee of the National Poultry Improvement Plan, the Secretary's Advisory Committee on poultry health. The committee serves as a forum for the study of problems related to poultry health and makes specific recommendations concerning ways USDA can assist the industry in addressing these problems. Deadline for nominations is November 20. For details, visit <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/E6-16458.htm>.

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