

# SMA InfoMeat

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## FSIS Revises Directive, Plans New Notices

Last week the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) revised Directive 5420.5, titled, Homeland Security Threat Condition Response Intelligence Reports and Communications. This directive details the procedures that FSIS' Office of Food Defense and Emergency Response should follow when the Department of Homeland Security declares a threat condition yellow, orange or red. FSIS also issued Notice 69-06, on October 20, titled, Export Certification of Imported Natural Casings. The notice instructs inspection program personnel on what is required to certify for export natural casings that were imported from other countries. The directive and notice can be viewed on FSIS' website at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp). Within the next month, FSIS expects to issue the following directives:

- 5000.3 - Segregation of Adulterated Product. This directive provides inspection program personnel with instructions for verifying that an establishment identifies, segregates and properly holds adulterated product that has been returned to or received by the establishment for further processing. This directive also addresses products that an establishment holds pending receipt of FSIS or establishment testing results.
- 7000.1 - Verification of Non-Food Safety Consumer Protection Regulatory Requirements. This directive provides updated instructions for verifying compliance with the regulatory requirements designed to provide consumer protections other than food safety. This directive also issues new inspection system procedures for all the 04 and 05B procedures.

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

- Use of Training Material. This notice clarifies the appropriate use of FSIS workforce training material.
- Use of Results from Non-Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Laboratories. This notice describes the decision-making process FSIS uses when determining whether it is appropriate to rely on results from a non-FSIS laboratory.

## Peru, Columbia Agree to End U.S. Beef Ban

The office of the U.S. Trade Representative announced that Peru and Colombia have agreed to end restrictions on U.S. beef imports and will allow the importation of all U.S. beef and beef products, including those derived from animals of all ages. The agreement with Peru took effect October 25 and an agreement for exports to Colombia will take effect on October 31. Both agreements must be ratified by the U.S. Congress before being finalized. Also, plants will be eligible to export once the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issues new certification requirements. Approximately twenty countries around the world have maintained bans on U.S. beef since December 2003, when bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was discovered in the U.S. herd. Many governments have lifted their ban, but impose various restrictions and allow only specific types of meat from cows under 30 months of age. Removing barriers to U.S. beef has emerged as a major priority in U.S. trade strategy. According to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), U.S. beef exports remain at little over half their 2003 levels. Washington has urged countries to open their markets to all U.S. approved beef that meets World Animal Health Organization (OIE) standards. The U.S. has also been urging China to relax its beef import ban, although trade is yet to resume.

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## FSIS Updates New Technology Table

New technologies have resulted in significant improvements in the safety of meat and poultry in recent years. FSIS defines "new technology" as new, or new applications of, equipment, substances, methods, processes, or procedures affecting the slaughter of livestock and poultry or processing of meat, poultry, or egg products. To encourage continued improvement and innovation in food safety technologies, FSIS believes that increased public and industry awareness of new technologies could further promote their use, particularly by small and very small plants, in improving the safety of meat, poultry, and egg products. In an effort to share this information, FSIS is providing a brief summary table describing some of the new technologies that it has received and reviewed, and for which FSIS has had "no objection" to use in FSIS establishments. Also listed is the case number assigned to the new technology and the name of the establishment. The listing will be updated on a weekly basis and new technologies published will remain on the web for a period of 12 months. Access the table at [www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations\\_&\\_policies/New\\_Technology\\_Table\\_Feb\\_06/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/New_Technology_Table_Feb_06/index.asp).

## USDA Announces New Public Notification Protocol for Bird Flu

The U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior recently announced changes in public notification protocols for avian influenza. Initial rapid screening tests are highly sensitive and can detect inactive viruses in samples, so it is not unexpected to have positive results on an initial screening, and then to have confirmatory testing reveal that no active virus is present in a sample. To date, USDA and DOI have announced 12 presumptive positive and/or confirmatory test results in six states (MI, MD, PA, MT, IL and OH). As the expanded surveillance of wild birds for highly pathogenic avian influenza increases in the coming months, USDA and DOI expect additional detections of the "North American strain" of low pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (LPAI H5N1). Because these detections are common and pose no threat to human health USDA and DOI are transitioning to a new method of notifying the public. USDA and DOI will post all future suspected LPAI H5N1 detections on the Internet. DOI will maintain a list of all such routine detections as part of the National Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Early Detection Data System (HEDDS). The low path H5N1 detection list can be accessed at <http://wildlifedisease.nhii.gov/ai/LPAITable.pdf>. A link also will be available on USDA's avian influenza website at [www.usda.gov/birdflu](http://www.usda.gov/birdflu). In the event of a presumptive H5N1 test result involving a large number of sick or dead birds, or other circumstances that suggest the possibility of a highly pathogenic virus, USDA and DOI will issue a news release or conduct a technical briefing to notify the media and the public.

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## Briefly . . .

**FSIS to Hold Regulatory Education Sessions for Small, Very Small Plants:** FSIS will hold regulatory education sessions on October 24, for the owners and operators of small and very small plants in Mississippi and Colorado. 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 from 6:30 - 8:30 PM at the Clarion Hotel Jackson, 5075 Interstate 55 North Frontage Road, Jackson, MS and at the Four Points by Sheraton, 6363 E. Hampden Avenue, Denver, CO. 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 in November and December in Pennsylvania, Georgia and Texas.

**Senator Seeks Blanket BSE Testing for Exports to Japan:** U.S. Senator Jim Bunning has sent a letter to Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns urging him to allow beef producers to conduct blanket testing for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) for their exports to Japan and other countries. "This is vital to regaining U.S. market share in Japan, South Korea and other markets critical to U.S. beef suppliers," the Kentucky Republican wrote. Bunning also expressed concerns about the announcement by Johanns in July that USDA will reduce its nationwide testing program to about one-tenth this year. "Robust government testing, coupled with voluntary private testing, would go a long way toward restoring foreign consumer confidence and maintaining domestic confidence in American beef," Bunning said. The USDA maintains that human health is protected by such safeguard measures as the removal of brains, spinal cords and other specified risk materials.

**FSIS Posts Commonly Asked Questions on Corrective Actions:** FSIS issued Notice 70-06 on October 23 titled, Availability of Commonly Asked Questions Regarding Corrective Actions. This notice informs inspection program personnel that the agency posted to its website commonly asked questions from small and very small establishments about corrective actions. It does not issue any verification procedures to FSIS personnel. The question and answer documents are available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/help/FAQs\\_Small\\_&\\_Very\\_Small\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/help/FAQs_Small_&_Very_Small_Plants/index.asp).

**FDA May Soon Approve Cloned Meat, Milk:** According to a *Washington Post* report, an FDA risk assessment that is expected to declare meat and milk derived from cloned animals safe for the public food supply is currently being reviewed by the government and is due to be released by the end of the year. If finalized, cloned animal products will become part of the food supply, without the requirement for such foods to carry special labeling. Recently, advocacy groups filed a petition asking the FDA to regulate cloned farm animals one type at a time, much as it regulates new drugs. Proponents believe cloning is simply the latest in a string of advances such as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization that have given producers better control over animal reproduction. The agency has said it plans to regulate transgenic animals that have been engineered by adding specific, valuable genes.

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If you haven't already done so, please take a few moments to review your directory listing and submit any changes. Current information will make SMA's 2007 edition as accurate and useful as possible for the upcoming year!