

FSIS REPORT  
CONFERENCE FOR FOOD PROTECTION BOARD MEETING  
FDA, College Park, MD August 26-27, 2005

**A. Mechanically Tenderized Beef Products**

FSIS published a Federal Register Notice (70 FR30331) “ HACCP Plan Reassessment for Mechanically Tenderized Beef Products” on May 26, 2005, available on web site: [www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/04-042N.htm](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/04-042N.htm)

The notice informed ‘establishments that produce mechanically tenderized beef products that in their next annual HACCP reassessment for these products, they must take into account the potential hazard of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) O157:H7 because there have been recent outbreaks of disease from this pathogen that have been associated with the consumption of mechanically tenderized beef..’ The reassessment applies to raw and cooked mechanically tenderized beef products including those that are injected with marinade (or “enhanced” products).

FSIS also issued Notice 32-05 (6/1/05) “Verification of Establishment’s Reassessment of HACCP Plans to Address Mechanically Tenderized Beef Products” to inform its inspection program personnel about the Federal Notice, and that inspection program personnel at an establishment that produces mechanically tenderized beef products verify that the establishment has evidence that it considered the potential hazard of *E. coli* O157:H7 as part of its hazard analysis or HACCP plans, or in a record of reassessment. An establishment that produces mechanically tenderized beef products and has considered the potential hazard of *E. coli* O157:H7 in its HACCP system before the issuance of the FR notice does not need to repeat the reassessment.

**B. Guidance on Relative Humidity for RTE Meat and Poultry Products**

FSIS provided guidance on relative humidity application for cooked and heated RTE meat and poultry products (FSIS Notice 43-05, 6/30/05). It stated that relative humidity provisions in Appendix A, Compliance Guidelines for lethality for the final rule “Performance Standards for the Production of Certain Meat and Poultry Products” apply to all meat and poultry roasts and jerky. Examples were given when additional humidity is not needed because the method of processing already provides the needed humidity, such as cooking in a sealed moisture impermeable bag.

**C. Meat and Poultry Standards**

FSIS published a final rule “Food Standards: Requirements for Substitute Standardized Meat and Poultry Products Named by Use of an Expressed Nutrient Content Claim and a Standardized Term” (70 FR 33803-33819, 6/10/2005). FSIS is ‘amending the Federal meat and poultry inspection regulations to establish a general definition and standard of identity for standardized meat and poultry products that have been modified to qualify for use of an expressed nutrient content claim in their product names.’ Expressed nutrient content claims such as “fat free”, “low fat”, and “light” in conjunction with the appropriate standardized term such as “low fat bologna” will be used to identify the products. This final rule replaces policy memos on the labeling of some such products

that the Agency issued in the past as interim measures until such times that a final rule could be completed.

With this rule, FSIS aims to: 1) provide for modified versions of standardized meat and poultry products with reductions of certain constituents that are of health concerns to consumers, such as fat, cholesterol and sodium, thereby assisting consumers in maintaining healthy dietary practices; 2) increase regulatory flexibility and support product innovation; and 3) provide consumers with an informative nutrition labeling system [for meat and poultry products].

#### **D. Water Reuse Questions and Answers**

FSIS clarifies its policies pertaining to water and water reuse as set out in 9 CFR 416 (g)(1),(2),(3),(4),(5), and (6) in FSIS Notice 38-05 (6/20/05) Questions and Answers (Q & A) guidance document. This Q&A addresses the reuse of water, ice, and solutions that come into contact with product, equipment, or other surfaces and that are used again for the same or other purpose within limits of 9CFR 416.2(g). It is intended to supplement the Sanitation Performance Standards Compliance Guide as additional guidance on water reuse. The questions and answers are available on the FSIS website at:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/fdad/FSISNotices/WaterReuseQA.pdf>

#### **E. Guidance for Determining Whether a Poultry Slaughter or Processing Operation is Exempt from Inspection Requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act**

FSIS Notice 41-05 6/29/05 announces the availability of Guidance for Determining Whether a Poultry Slaughter or Processing Operation is Exempt from Inspection Requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act to help small businesses and poultry producers who slaughter or process poultry for human food determine whether the slaughter or processing operations at their businesses are eligible for exemption from Federal or State inspection. Provisions regarding exemption from Federal or State inspection of poultry slaughter and processing operations in the [Poultry Products Inspection Act 21 USC 454 & 464](#) and FSIS's poultry [regulations](#) are difficult to understand and interpret.

The guidance presents the seven types of slaughter and processing operations that the Act exempts from Federal or State inspection in an easy-to-understand text and straightforward format. The discussion on each exemption includes a list of criteria that the business must meet to be eligible to slaughter and process poultry products without continuous FSIS or State inspection.

The compliance guidance is currently available on the web:

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations\\_&\\_policies/Compliance\\_Guides\\_Index/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Compliance_Guides_Index/index.asp)

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations\\_&\\_policies/compliance\\_assistance/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/compliance_assistance/index.asp)

#### **F. FSIS Directive 5730.1 Dual Jurisdiction Establishments**

FSIS issued Directive 5730.1 (June 28, 2005) to provide instructions to FSIS inspection program personnel about their roles and responsibilities with regard to

inspection, verification, documentation of findings, and enforcement actions in establishments that operate under the jurisdiction of both FSIS and FDA. Dual Jurisdiction Establishments are those establishments that produce and ship products regulated by both FDA and FSIS. The directive does not address situations that involve the manufacture of FSIS products that incorporate ingredients produced under FDA jurisdiction.

#### **G. Guidance for School Food Authorities: Developing a School Food Safety Program Based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles**

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service developed a guidance document for the implementation of the HACCP-based food safety programs in schools participating in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program. This guidance document will help in meeting the requirements of the amended Richard Russell National School Lunch Act, which calls for school food safety authorities to implement a food safety program for the preparation and service of school meals served to children in the school year beginning July 1, 2005.

The guidance document includes the purposes and requirements of a school food safety program, the different steps in developing a school food safety program, definitions and references. The Appendix includes examples of 1) standard operating procedures for cooking, cooling, reheating, personal hygiene and others; 2) procedures for handling leftovers; 3) sample food safety programs; and 4) recordkeeping logs.

The guidance document was issued in June 2005 and is available on the website:

[www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Downloadable/HACCPGuidance.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Downloadable/HACCPGuidance.pdf)

#### **H. “Is It Done Yet” Campaign**

FSIS started a national campaign with the theme “*Is It Done Yet? You Can’t Tell by Looking. Use a Food Thermometer to be Sure*” to promote the use of a food thermometer to cook meat, poultry and egg products to safe internal temperatures and prevent foodborne illness. The theme was based on the questions most kids asked impatiently about foods being cooked in the kitchen or on a barbecue grill. Using a food thermometer will give the answer to the question “Is it done yet?”

FSIS is emphasizing the use of thermometers because studies have shown that this is the only way to tell if bacteria are destroyed during cooking. According to a Food Safety survey conducted by FSIS and FDA, only 6 % of home cooks use a food thermometer for cooking hamburgers and only 10 % use a food thermometer for cooking chicken breasts.

FSIS has created a web site ([www.IsItDoneYet.gov](http://www.IsItDoneYet.gov)) to provide consumers with information such as recommended internal temperatures for cooking, instructions on how to use a food thermometer and others; and is partnering with various organizations, agencies, and local groups to help spread the important food safety message.