USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service

A Century of Service, A Future of Promise, A Legacy of Public Health

USDA-FSIS Agency Report 2013 Fall Executive Board Meeting Conference for Food Protection

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"Descriptive Designation for Needle- or blade-tenderized (Mechanically Tenderized) Beef Products"

(FSIS Proposes New Labeling Rules for Mechanically Tenderized Beef Products)

Descriptive Designation for Needle or Blade Tenderized (Mechanically Tenderized) Beef Products

- On June 10, 2013, FSIS published in the Federal Register (FRN# 2008-0017) the proposed rule, "Descriptive Designation for Needle- or blade-tenderized (Mechanically Tenderized) Beef Products."

- The Agency is proposing to require the use of the descriptive designation "mechanically tenderized" on the labels of raw or partially cooked needle or blade tenderized beef products, including beef products injected with marinade or solution, unless such products are destined to be fully cooked at an official establishment.

Descriptive Designation for Needle or Blade Tenderized (Mechanically Tenderized) Beef Products

- FSIS is proposing that the product name for such beef products include the descriptive designation "mechanically tenderized" and accurate description of the beef component.
- FSIS is also proposing to require that labels of raw and partially cooked needle or blade tenderized beef products destined for household consumers, hotels, restaurants, or similar institutions include validated cooking instructions that:
  - inform consumers that these products need to be cooked to a specified minimum internal temperature, and
  - whether they need to be held at that minimum internal temperature for a specified time before consumption, i.e., dwell time or rest time, to ensure that they are thoroughly cooked.

Descriptive Designation for Needle or Blade Tenderized (Mechanically Tenderized) Beef Products

Update

- On August 9, 2013, FSIS announced that it is extending the comment period for this proposed rule until October 8, 2013.
- The Agency is taking this action in response to two requests made by trade associations for additional time to comment on the proposed rule and the guidance.
- FSIS is also announcing that it has posted on its website "FSIS Compliance Guideline for Validating Cooking Instructions for Mechanically Tenderized Beef Products, 2013"

Descriptive Designation for Needle or Blade Tenderized (Mechanically Tenderized) Beef Products

Update

- The Agency has posted this guidance on FSIS Significant Guidance Documents web page.

- FSIS is requesting comments specifically for additional scientifically valid data on cooking instructions developed for various mechanically tenderized beef products that have been found to consistently meet an endpoint temperature and rest time sufficient to ensure the product is fully cooked.

Availability of Guidance: Establishment Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory

Availability of Guidance: Establishments Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory

- On June 27, 2013, FSIS announced the availability of final guidance for federally inspected establishments in the selection of commercial and private microbiological testing laboratories.

- FSIS has posted this policy guidance on its Web page. http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/compliance-guides-index.

- FSIS is encouraging establishments that prepare meat, poultry, or processed egg products to consider the criteria in this guidance in selecting commercial or private microbiological testing laboratories and in determining the laboratories' capability to provide accurate and reliable results.

Availability of Guidance: Establishments Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory

- FSIS-regulated establishments may perform microbiological testing (or contract with an outside laboratory) for various reasons, including, but not limited to the following:
  - To fulfill regulatory requirements (9 CFR 310.25, 381.94, 430.4, 590.580);
  - To support on-going verification of the establishment's HACCP plan (9 CFR 417.4(a)(2);
  - To support decisions made in the establishment's hazard analysis (9 CFR 417.5(a)(1) and 417.5(a)(2);
  - To evaluate the effectiveness of the establishment's sanitation program (9 CFR 416.14); or
  - To comply with customers' purchase specifications or requirements.

Availability of Guidance: Establishments Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory

- Establishments that select laboratories that do not apply appropriate testing methods or maintain effective Quality Control or Quality Assurance (QC/QA) practices may not receive reliable or useful test results and thus run the risk of not being aware that the food that they have produced is unsafe.

- In response to comments received, FSIS has revised the guidance to clarify that establishments that select laboratories that meet the guidance provided in the ISO 17025 accreditation schemes would meet the applicable criteria set out in FSIS's guidance.

Availability of Guidance: Establishments Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory

- FSIS also revised this guidance to explain that establishments that have samples analyzed using an accredited laboratory and an FSIS Microbiology Laboratory Guidebook (MLG) method would meet the applicable criteria recommended in this guidance.

- FSIS also revised this guidance to state that proficiency testing (PT) should be performed on a regular basis.

Availability of Guidance: Establishments Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory

- FSIS has made available a web-based list of validated methods commonly used by regulated establishments to test for relevant foodborne pathogens (i.e., *E. coli* O157:H7; *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Listeria* species; and *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* species) in meat, poultry, and processed egg products. The list of these methods is available at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/New+Technologies.

QUESTIONS