

New USDA Food Safety Requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L.108-265, Section 111), requires both expanded and new food safety activities for schools.

- Web link for P.L.108-265: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/nslp-legislation.htm>

The food safety provisions in the 2004 Reauthorization Act, effective July 1, 2005, cover food safety inspections and school food safety programs. The main points of the provisions are summarized below.

- Web link for school food safety: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Guidance/>

Food Safety Inspections

- ✓ 2 required per year
- ✓ inspections must be conducted by a “state or local governmental agency responsible for food safety inspections”
- ✓ schools must post inspection reports and make them available to the public
- ✓ State or local governments allowed to adopt stricter requirements
- ✓ State Agencies must provide annual reports to USDA on the number of inspections per school per year. The reports will be based on information supplied by the school districts, not by food safety regulators.

On June 15, USDA published an interim rule on food safety inspections in the Federal Register that puts the regulatory changes into place immediately, while requesting public comments. The public is encouraged to comment during the one year comment period.

- Web link to Federal Register Notice on inspections: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Food-Safety/2005-06-15.pdf>

School Food Safety Programs based on HACCP principles

- ✓ Each School Food Authority must implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles.
- ✓ The program must be implemented in the school year 2005-2006.
- ✓ Guidance is provided by USDA
- Web link for *Guidance for School Food Authorities for Developing a School Food Safety Program Based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles*: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Downloadable/HACCPGuidance.pdf>

Questions and Answers

The State Agency that administers the NSLP has the responsibility for verifying compliance with the food safety provisions. Further explanation and/or clarification can be found in Questions & Answers provided on the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website.

- Web link for Questions & Answers: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Food-Safety/FoodSafety.pdf>