



## Almanza to Retire

Acting Deputy Under Secretary and FSIS Administrator Al Almanza is retiring on July 31, capping a 39 year career with the Agency. As he stated in his letter to employees, he is proud of the accomplishments to modernize food safety and he leaves knowing that the mission to protect public health will be in the good hands of the nearly 9,500 dedicated public servants of FSIS. All are invited to join FSIS to celebrate Mr. Almanza's retirement and to thank him for his contributions to food safety on USDA's Whitten Patio on July 20, 2017 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.

## USDA Names New Humane Handling Ombudsman

FSIS is announcing the appointment of Dr. Kurt Schulz as the new Humane Handling Ombudsman, effective immediately.

The creation of the Humane Handling Ombudsman position was one of several measures taken by USDA to improve FSIS verification and enforcement of federal humane handling laws and regulations. FSIS employees, Agency stakeholders and the general public can report humane handling concerns or complaints when the standard reporting mechanisms do not adequately address or resolve outstanding issues.

The duties and activities of the Humane Handling Ombudsman are founded on three guiding principles:

- Act as an independent, confidential and neutral resource for FSIS employees and stakeholders to bring forward complaints and concerns related to federal humane handling laws and regulations.
- Collaborate with all concerned parties by facilitating and effectuating resolutions that are fair and equitable.
- Identify individual and systemic improvements to address humane handling problems that may threaten the effectiveness of the Agency's food safety mission and assist in the implementation of those improvements along with ways to minimize recurrence.

The previous Ombudsman, who served since 2012, Mr. Mark Crowe, accepted a promotion within FSIS. For more information, please contact Dr. Kurt Schulz, DVM, at [Kurt.schulz@osec.usda.gov](mailto:Kurt.schulz@osec.usda.gov) or you can visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/production-and-inspection/humane-handling-ombudsman/humane-handling-ombudsman>.

### In This Issue

- 1 Almanza to Retire
- 1 USDA Names New Humane Handling Ombudsman
- 2 FSIS Schedules Industry Webinar for Roll-out of Egg Products Plant Food Safety Assessments
- 2 Food Safety Discovery Zone at California State Fair
- 2 Export Requirements Updates
- 3 FSIS Posts Updated Import Data
- 3 Policy Updates
- 3 FSIS Posts Aggregate Poultry Data
- 3 FSIS Expands Residue Testing Methods
- 4 Reminder: Educational Meetings on the Implementation of Siluriformes Inspection
- 4 Update: Testing for *E. coli*

# FSIS Schedules Industry Webinar for Roll-out of Egg Products Plant Food Safety Assessments

In the [March 3, 2017 Constituent Update](#) FSIS announced its plans to begin a phased roll-out of the Public Health Risk Evaluation (PHRE) and Food Safety Assessment (FSA) methodologies in egg products plants, similar to meat and poultry, and sought comments on the concept and phased roll-out. FSIS received four comments from a single egg products association and has thoroughly considered the comments provided. The *Constituent Update* stated that FSIS would not conduct any PHREs or FSAs until the comment period closed and a public webinar was held.

FSIS is now announcing the public webinar to describe the phased roll-out and how the PHRE methodology and FSA methodology will be applied at egg products plants to address comments received, and to answer any questions. The webinar will be held on Aug. 9, 2017 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. ET. People who wish to attend in person can do so at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Whitten Building, 1400 Jefferson Drive SW, Washington, D.C. 20024.

To register for this event, please send an email to: [Buckley.Mckay@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Buckley.Mckay@fsis.usda.gov). Please provide your name, name of company, mailing address, contact number and email address, and indicate if you plan on attending in person or by teleconference. Call-in information for the webinar will be sent closer to the date to registered participants attending by teleconference.

## Food Safety Discovery Zone at California State Fair

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety Discovery Zone (FSDZ) will continue its national food safety education tour with an exhibition at the California State Fair in Sacramento, Calif., from July 14-30, 2017. The FSDZ is a 40-foot long exhibit that provides visitors of all ages with interactive and fun experiences that teach them how to prevent foodborne illness when preparing food at home.

This one of a kind, interactive food safety exhibit is visiting the California State Fair for the first time. The FSDZ teaches visitors how to prevent foodborne illness by emphasizing four fun and easy lessons:

- Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Separate: Don't cross-contaminate. Keep raw meat and poultry separate from ready to eat foods.
- Cook: Always use a food thermometer to ensure foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature.
- Chill: Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry and egg products promptly.

Make sure to stop by from July 14-30, 2017. Food safety experts will be on hand to answer questions from Monday-Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Friday-Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The FSDZ will be parked near the Farm, between buildings B and C. A map can be found at: <http://calexpo.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/GroundsMap.pdf>.

*FSIS Constituent Update* is prepared by the Congressional and Public Affairs Staff, Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education

Assistant Administrator  
Carol Blake

Deputy Assistant Administrator  
Aaron Lavallee

Acting Director  
Michelle Catlin

Editor  
Veronika Medina

Content and Technical Review Committee  
Kristen Booze  
Autumn Canaday  
Selena Kremer  
Maria Machuca

### Export Requirements Updates

The Library of Export Requirements has been updated for the following countries:

Belarus  
Hong Kong  
Kazakhstan  
People's Republic of China

For a complete list of countries, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/international-affairs/exporting-products>.

## FSIS Posts Updated Import Data

The updated dataset on import refusals for products regulated by FSIS is now available on the FSIS website. Federal law requires every commercial shipment of imported meat, poultry and egg products to be inspected prior to product entering U.S. commerce. FSIS inspects each shipment to verify labeling, proper certification, general condition, any signs of tampering and to identify product adulterated by transportation damage. FSIS also performs additional activities on a random and/or for-cause basis such as physical product examination and laboratory sampling for pathogens and chemical residues.

Any product that does not meet FSIS requirements is refused entry, and the importer has up to 45 days (30 days for egg products) to have the product destroyed for use as human food, re-exported or returned to the foreign country, converted to animal food, or brought into compliance with FSIS requirements, if applicable (e.g. relabeled, remarked, replacement certificate). This dataset is updated around the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month and contains each shipment with product that was refused entry. For more visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/data>.

## FSIS Posts Aggregate Poultry Data

On July 20, 2017, FSIS will update the publicly posted aggregate sampling results (not individual establishments) relative to *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* process control categories for establishments producing young chicken or turkey carcasses, raw chicken parts and Not Ready-To-Eat (NRTE) comminuted poultry products at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/microbiology/salmonella-verification-testing-program>. FSIS intends to resume individual establishment category web posting in the future once additional results from follow-up sampling for establishments that are in category three have been used to help assess establishment corrective actions. FSIS will be regularly assessing the aggregate data to determine if the follow-up sampling is working effectively.

## FSIS Expands Residue Testing Methods

A new Chemistry Laboratory Guidebook method, "Screening and Confirmation of Animal Drug Residues by UHPLC-HRMS-MS" (CLG-MRM2) has been approved for both beef and pork muscle and beef and pork kidney. This is the first FSIS method to use High Resolution Mass Spectrometry (HRMS) to identify animal drug residues. The method adds a powerful new tool to complement existing multi-residue methods in use at FSIS laboratories, as it allows for confirmation of several additional analytes. The Agency intends to begin using the method after Aug. 21, 2017. The method is available at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/science/laboratories-and-procedures/guidebooks-and-methods/chemistry-laboratory-guidebook>.

## Policy Updates

FSIS notices and directives on public health and regulatory issues are available at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations>. The following policy updates was recently issued:

Notice 36-17 - Eligibility of the Netherlands to Export Raw Non-Intact Veal and Raw Intact Veal Intended for Raw Non-Intact Use to the U.S.

# Reminder: Educational Meetings on the Implementation of Siluriformes Inspection

On June 16, 2017, FSIS announced two educational meetings—the first one occurred on June 27, 2017 in Richmond, Va. and the second is scheduled to take place on July 20, 2017 in Baltimore, Md. The primary objectives of the meetings are to provide updated information to stakeholders and to encourage dialogue between FSIS and the Siluriformes fish industry. FSIS is particularly interested in soliciting participation from representatives from domestic wild-caught operations that process Siluriformes fish and fish products. Affected industry and interested individuals, organizations and other stakeholders are invited to participate in the meetings.

Persons wishing to attend the Baltimore meeting are encouraged to register in advance. The cutoff date for pre-registration is July 18, 2017. The meeting will take place on July 20, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. ET in Baltimore, Md. at the Sheraton Baltimore Washington International Hotel, located at 1100 Old Elkridge Landing Rd., Linthicum Heights, MD 21090. For directions and parking instructions, please visit <http://www.sheratonbwiairport.com/>. On-site registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. ET.

To pre-register please visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/newsroom/meetings>. For further information, please feel free to contact Evelyn Arce, Outreach and Partnership Division, Office of Outreach, Employee Education and Training via telephone (202-418-8903), fax (202-690-6519) or email: [Evelyn.Arce@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Evelyn.Arce@fsis.usda.gov) regarding additional information about these meetings or to arrange for special accommodations.

## UPDATE: FSIS Testing for *E.coli*



FSIS posts biweekly updates of the Agency's raw ground beef *E. coli* sampling program, which includes testing results of raw ground beef component samples for *E. coli* O157:H7 and Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STECs) from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs. Data are also presented for non-O157 STECs by each non-O157 STEC serogroup.

Between June 4, 2012 and July 9, 2017, FSIS laboratory services analyzed a total of 19,304 beef trim samples (15,671 domestic and 3,633 imported) 4,103 routine follow-up samples (3,989 domestic and 114 imported) and 364 non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. One hundred and ninety seven samples were found to be positive. 118 were domestic trim samples, 10 were imported trim samples, 65 were domestic follow-up samples and four were non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. To date, three samples have been positive for both O157:H7 and at least one non-O157 STEC strain and 10 samples have been positive for two different non-O157 O-groups. To review testing results, visit the *E. coli* data tables at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/microbiology/ec>.