



## FSIS Announces Educational Meetings on the Implementation of the Final Rule on the Mandatory Inspection of Fish of the Order of Siluriformes

FSIS is announcing two educational meetings—one on June 27, 2017 in Richmond, Va. and the second one on July 18, 2017 in Baltimore, Md.—to discuss the enforcement and implementation of the Final Rule on the “Mandatory Inspection of Fish of the order Siluriformes and Products Derived from such Fish.” 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 are encouraged to register in advance. The cutoff dates for pre-registration are as follows: Richmond, Va. – June 26, 2017 and Baltimore, Md. – July 18, 2017. The recently published *Federal Register* Notice (FRN) announcing the Educational Meetings provides Friday, June 23, 2017 as the pre-registration cutoff date for the Richmond, Va. meeting. However, the Agency will accept pre-registrations until June 26, 2017.

The first meeting will be held on June 27, 2017 from 9.00 a.m.to 3:00 p.m. ET in Richmond, Va. at the Hilton Richmond Downtown hotel, located at 501 E. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219. For directions and parking instructions, please visit <http://www.richmonddowntown.hilton.com>. On-site registration will begin at 8.30 a.m. ET. The second 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 for either meeting, please visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/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 E-mail: [Evelyn.Arce@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Evelyn.Arce@fsis.usda.gov) regarding additional information about these meetings, or to arrange for special accommodations.

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# FSIS Announces Proposed Rule on Eligibility of the People's Republic of China to Export Poultry Products to the United States

On June 16, 2017, FSIS published a proposed rule to allow China to export poultry products derived from poultry slaughtered in China to the United States. The proposed rule can be found at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/8ca23ef5-57a5-445b-b770-be75150ff076/2016-0002.htm?MOD=AJPERES>.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is currently eligible to export processed (cooked) poultry products to the United States if the products are derived from poultry slaughtered in the United States or in other countries eligible to slaughter and export poultry to the United States. FSIS has reviewed the PRC's laws, regulations and poultry slaughter inspection system as implemented and has tentatively determined that the PRC's poultry slaughter inspection system is equivalent to the system that the United States has established under the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) and its implementing regulations.

According to the data, if the rule should become final, the projected volume of export to the United States would be about 324 million pounds per year for the next five years. Given that the U.S. domestic annual production volume of RTE fully-cooked poultry is about 12.3 billion pounds, the projected cooked poultry products from the PRC would only be about 2.6 percent of total U.S. production in the next five years.

Even if the PRC were to be listed in FSIS' regulations as eligible to export poultry products to the United States, the products must also comply with all other applicable requirements of the United States, including those of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), before any products can enter the United States. At this time, the PRC would only be allowed to export cooked poultry products to the United States, because APHIS has classified the PRC as a region affected with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza subtype H5N1 and Exotic Newcastle Disease (see 9 CFR 94.6).

Once the comment period closes, FSIS will assess the comments that it receives. FSIS will make a final determination on PRC's equivalence and determine whether to publish a final regulation in the *Federal Register* on the basis of all the evidence before the Agency and information provided through the comments.

To learn more about the equivalence process, document review and audit review, please visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/topics/international-affairs/importing-products/equivalence/equivalence-process-overview>.

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

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## Export Requirements Updates

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

European Union  
New Zealand  
Trinidad & Tobago  
People's Republic of China

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

# Extension of Comment Period of Notice Adjusting Inspection Coverage at Siluriformes Establishments

On May 17, 2017, FSIS published a *Federal Register* Notice announcing its plan to adjust inspection coverage at official fish slaughter establishments, starting Sept. 1, 2017, from all hours of operation to once per production shift. FSIS announced this plan based on its in-plant experience to date, confirming that fish slaughter establishments are most similar in operation and design to meat processing-only establishments. The change also will facilitate the efficient use of inspection personnel. The comment period for this announcement was to end on June 16, 2017. In response to a request, FSIS has agreed to extend the comment period until July 17, 2017.

# FSIS Compliance Guidelines for Small and Very Small Meat and Poultry Establishments Regarding Lethality and Stabilization in Meat and Poultry Products Available

On June 16, 2017, FSIS published a *Federal Register* Notice announcing the availability of, and requesting comments on, two updated compliance guidelines regarding the destruction of *Salmonella* and other pathogens in ready-to-eat (RTE) products (lethality) and the control of pathogen growth in heat-treated RTE and not-ready-to-eat (NRTE) products during cooling and hot-holding (stabilization). FSIS is including the time-temperature tables and cooling options in these guidelines that were previously found in Appendices A and B. The guidelines, which were originally made available in 1999, have new recommendations that establishments can use to achieve lethality and stabilization of these products. The compliance guides are available on FSIS' website at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/bf3f01a1-a0b7-4902-a2df-a87c73d1b633/Salmonella-Compliance-Guideline-SVSP-RTE-Appendix-A.pdf?MOD=AJPERES> and also at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/9ac49aba-46bc-443c-856b-59a3f51b924f/Compliance-Guideline-Stabilization-Appendix-B.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

Comments must be received on or before Aug. 15, 2017 and may be submitted online via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>; by mail sent to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Mailstop 3782, Room 8-163A, Washington, DC 20250-3700 or by hand-or courier-delivery to Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street S.W., Room 8-163A, Washington, DC 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name and docket number FSIS-2017-0016.

## FSIS Announces Change to its Siluriformes Fish Website

FSIS continues to gain significant insight into the domestic farm-raised and wild-caught Siluriformes fish (which includes catfish) industries during the transitional period which began March 1, 2016. Based on this insight, FSIS is announcing that it is removing from its website answers to frequently asked questions on “wild-caught” Siluriformes in order to update the responses. FSIS intends to post updated information on “wild-caught” fish at a later date.

## FSIS Posts Updated Dataset on Imports

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/ 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 15th of each month and contains each shipment with product that was refused entry. For more information, please visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/data>.

## FSIS Posts Aggregate Results for Chicken Parts, Comminuted Poultry and Poultry Carcasses Tested for *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*

On June 20, 2017, FSIS will update the publicly posted aggregate sampling results (not individual establishments) relative to process control categories for establishments producing young chicken or turkey carcasses, raw chicken parts or Not Ready-To-Eat (NRTE) comminuted poultry products at <https://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.

**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 June 11, 2017, FSIS laboratory services analyzed a total of 18,737 beef trim samples (15,439 domestic and 3,298 imported) 4,044 routine follow-up samples (3,930 domestic and 114 imported) and 364 non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. One hundred and ninety-four samples were found to be positive. 116 were domestic trim samples, 10 were imported trim samples, 64 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/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/microbiology/ec>

## 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 were recently issued:

**Docket No. FSIS-2016-0002** - *Eligibility of the People's Republic of China (PRC) To Export to the United States Poultry Products From Birds Slaughtered in the PRC*

**Docket No. FSIS-2017-0003** - *Extension of Comment Period, Changes to the Inspection Coverage in Official Establishments That Slaughter Fish of the Order Siluriformes*

**Docket No. FSIS-2017-0016** - *Compliance Guidelines for Small and Very Small Meat and Poultry Establishments*

**Docket No. FSIS-2017-0023** - *Educational Meetings on the Mandatory Inspection of Fish of the Order Siluriformes and Products Derived From Such Fish Final Rule Implementation*

## Get Answers at AskFSIS

AskFSIS is a web-based technology and policy question-and-answer forum on topics such as exporting, labeling, inspection, programs and procedures. In addition, AskFSIS offers Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds that link back to the Q and As.

To view recently posted topics, please visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/>.