

original certification documents arriving at the country's port of entry, to verify that the digital certificate copies align with the original certificates arriving with the shipment. A Level 2 eAuthentication account is necessary to access the FCL. An eAuthentication account is the way for a user to interact with USDA Web site portals and applications using a verified identity for each User ID and profile. Prior to implementation of the PHIS Export Component, FSIS will provide further guidance on this process.

#### USDA Export Stamp

The USDA export stamp bears the export certificate number, and is used to link the consignment to the corresponding export certificate. Beginning on the applicability date of June 29, 2018, FSIS is changing the number of digits in the serial number that appears on both the export stamp and the corresponding export certificate from six to seven numbers. Use of an alternative, alpha-numeric unique identifier in place of the USDA export stamp will be implemented with the PHIS Export Component on June 29, 2018.

#### eCert

In the future, FSIS also intends to support electronic export certification (eCert) in PHIS. eCert is the government-to-government transmission of certification data and is the electronic equivalent of a paper certificate. When developed and implemented, electronic export certification will allow FSIS to transfer certification data directly to the foreign government's competent authority's certification system.

#### Group 1 (June 29, 2018)

- Export Library:
  1. Australia
  2. New Zealand
  3. UAE
- Non-Export Library:
  1. Afghanistan
  2. Andorra
  3. Bahamas
  4. Bolivia
  5. Burundi
  6. Cape Verde
  7. Cook Islands
  8. Ethiopia
  9. Gambia
  10. Guinea
  11. Liberia
  12. Mozambique
  13. Paraguay
  14. San Marino
  15. Tanzania
  16. Uganda

#### USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

No agency, officer, or employee of the USDA shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, or political beliefs, exclude from participation in, deny the benefits of, or subject to discrimination any person in the United States under any program or activity conducted by the USDA.

To file a complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which may be accessed online at [http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain\\_combined\\_6\\_8\\_12.pdf](http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf), or write a letter signed by you or your authorized representative.

Send your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by mail, fax, or email:

*Mail:* U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410.

*Fax:* (202) 690-7442.

*Email:* [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

#### Additional Public Notification

FSIS will announce this notice online through the FSIS Web page located at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/federal-register>.

FSIS will also make copies of this **Federal Register** publication available through the FSIS Constituent Update, which is used to provide information regarding FSIS policies, procedures, regulations, **Federal Register** notices, FSIS public meetings, and other types of information that could affect or would be of interest to constituents and stakeholders. The Update is communicated via Listserv, a free electronic mail subscription service for industry, trade groups, consumer interest groups, health professionals, and other individuals who have asked to be included. The Update is also available on the FSIS Web page. In addition, FSIS offers an electronic mail subscription service which provides automatic and customized access to selected food safety news and information. This service is available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/subscribe>. Options range from recalls to export information to regulations, directives, and notices. Customers can add or delete subscriptions themselves, and

have the option to password protect their accounts.

Done at Washington, DC, on: August 31, 2017.

**Paul Kiecker,**

*Acting Administrator.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

#### Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. FSIS-2017-0028]

#### Availability of FSIS Compliance Guideline for Minimizing the Risk of Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia Coli (STEC) and Salmonella in Raw Beef (Including Veal) Processing Operations

**AGENCY:** Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is announcing the availability of and requesting comments on the updated compliance guideline for small and very small businesses on reducing STEC and *Salmonella* in beef and veal operations.

The new guideline will assist small and very small beef (including veal) processing establishments understand and comply with the regulatory requirements associated with controlling STEC and *Salmonella* in raw non-intact beef products and beef products intended for non-intact use. The guideline also includes information for establishments and retail stores on developing and maintaining records associated with the production of ground beef.

**DATES:** Submit Comments on or before November 6, 2017.

**ADDRESSES:** A downloadable version of the compliance guideline is available to view and print at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/compliance-guides-index> once copies of the guideline have been published.

FSIS invites interested persons to submit comments on this guidance. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

*Federal eRulemaking Portal:* This Web site provides the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on this Web page or attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the on-line instructions at that site for submitting comments.

*Mail, including CD-ROMs:* Send to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Patriots Plaza 3, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Mailstop 3782, Room 8–163B, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

*Hand- or courier-delivered submittals:* Deliver to Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street SW., Room 8–163A, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

*Instructions:* All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name, FSIS, and document title: FSIS Compliance Guideline for Minimizing the Risk of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and *Salmonella* in Raw Beef (including Veal) Processing Operations 2017. Comments received will be made available to the public and posted without change, including any personal information, at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

*Docket:* For access to background documents or to comments received, go to the FSIS Docket Room at Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street SW., Room 164–A, Washington, DC 20250–3700 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Roberta Wagner, Assistant Administrator, Office of Policy and Program Development; Telephone: (202) 205–0495.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Background**

STEC and *Salmonella* are pathogens that are associated with foodborne illness from consumption of non-intact beef products (e.g., ground beef, mechanically tenderized steaks). Although the percent positive rates of STEC and *Salmonella* have decreased, outbreaks and illnesses continue to occur from these products (<https://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2016-outbreaks.html>).

Raw non-intact beef products present a significant public health risk because they are frequently consumed after preparation (e.g., cooking hamburger to a rare or medium rare state) that does not destroy STEC that has been introduced below the product's surface. Given the low infectious dose of STEC associated with foodborne disease outbreaks and the very severe consequences of an STEC infection, including serious, life-threatening human illnesses (hemorrhagic colitis and hemolytic uremic syndrome), raw non-intact beef products and those beef products intended for non-intact use are adulterated within the meaning of the Federal Meat Inspection Act when

contaminated with STEC unless further processed to destroy this pathogen (64 FR 2803). *Salmonella* does not present the same severe health consequences as STEC, and FSIS does not have a zero tolerance for *Salmonella* in raw non-intact beef products. However, because STEC and *Salmonella* are hazards that have historically occurred in the production of non-intact beef products, establishments that produce these products or products intended for non-intact use must conduct a hazard analysis and determine if these pathogens need to be addressed by its Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system. FSIS is making available the updated compliance guideline to assist establishments that produce raw non-intact beef products in designing a HACCP system to prevent, control, and reduce STEC and *Salmonella* to acceptable levels in these products.

The guideline helps establishments understand the adulterant status of STEC in beef products, how the product's intended use impacts the hazard analysis, and to develop ongoing verification measures to demonstrate that the HACCP system is functioning as intended to reduce STEC to below detectable levels. In addition, the guideline provides updated information for establishments responding to STEC positive results to strengthen their food safety systems so that additional positive results do not occur in the product. While the guideline focuses primarily on STEC policy, the procedures described in this document to reduce STEC will also assist establishments in reducing *Salmonella*.

FSIS is also providing information in the updated guidance to assist federal establishments and retail facilities to develop and maintain grinding records as required by the final rule, *Records To Be Kept By Official Establishments and Retail Stores That May Grind Raw Beef Products* (80 FR 79231).

This guideline incorporates all of the above policy updates and includes the most current Agency thinking, and combines and replaces information from the following previously issued guidance documents:

- (1) Draft Guidance for Small and Very Small Establishments on Sampling Beef Products for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 (August 12, 2008); and
- (2) Sanitation Guidance for Beef Grinders (January 2012).

The target audiences for this compliance guideline are small and very small establishments in support of the Small Business Administration's initiative to provide such establishments with compliance

assistance under the Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Act (SBRFA). However, all FSIS regulated beef establishments may be able to apply the recommendations in this guideline.

#### **Additional Public Notification**

Public awareness of all segments of rulemaking and policy development is important. Consequently, FSIS will announce this **Federal Register** publication on-line through the FSIS Web page located at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/federal-register>.

FSIS also will make this publication available through the FSIS Constituent Update, which is used to provide information regarding FSIS policies, procedures, regulations, **Federal Register** notices, FSIS public meetings, and other types of information that could affect or would be of interest to our constituents and stakeholders. The Constituent Update is available on the FSIS Web page. Through the Web page, FSIS is able to provide information to a much broader, more diverse audience. In addition, FSIS offers an email subscription service which provides automatic and customized access to selected food safety news and information. This service is available at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/subscribe>. Options range from recalls to export information, regulations, directives, and notices. Customers can add or delete subscriptions themselves, and have the option to password protect their accounts.

#### **USDA Non-Discrimination Statement**

No agency, officer, or employee of the USDA shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, or political beliefs, exclude from participation in, deny the benefits of, or subject to discrimination any person in the United States under any program or activity conducted by the USDA.

#### *How To File a Complaint of Discrimination*

To file a complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which may be accessed online at [http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain\\_combined\\_6\\_8\\_12.pdf](http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf), or write a letter signed by you or your authorized representative.

Send your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by mail, fax, or email: *Mail:* U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue SW.,

Washington, DC 20250-9410, Fax: (202) 690-7442, Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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Done, at Washington, DC, August 31, 2017.

**Paul Kiecker,**

*Acting Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 2017-18847 Filed 9-5-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. FSIS-2017-0021]

#### International Standard-Setting Activities

**AGENCY:** Office of Food Safety, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice informs the public of the sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex), in accordance with section 491 of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979, as amended, and the Uruguay Round Agreements Act. This notice also provides a list of other standard-setting activities of Codex, including commodity standards, guidelines, codes of practice, and revised texts. This notice, which covers Codex activities during the time periods from June 1, 2016, to May 31, 2017, and June 1, 2017, to May 31, 2018, seeks comments on standards under consideration and recommendations for new standards.

**ADDRESSES:** FSIS invites interested persons to submit their comments on this notice. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* This Web site provides the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on this Web page or attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions at the Web site for submitting comments.

- *Mail, including CD-ROMs, etc.:* Mail to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), FSIS, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Mailstop 3782, Room 8-163B, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

- *Hand- or courier-delivered items:* Deliver to OPPD, RIMS, Docket Clearance Unit, Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street SW., Room 8-164, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

*Instructions:* All items submitted by mail or email are to include the Agency name and docket number FSIS-2017-0021. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information to <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Please state that your comments refer to Codex and, if your comments relate to specific Codex committees, please identify the committee(s) in your comments and submit a copy of your comments to the delegate from that particular committee.

*Docket:* For access to background documents or comments received, visit the FSIS Docket Room at Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street SW., Room 8-164, Washington, DC 20250-3700, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. A complete list of U.S. delegates and alternate delegates can be found in Attachment 2 of this notice.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Frances Lowe, United States Manager for Codex Alimentarius, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Food Safety, South Agriculture Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 4861, Washington, DC 20250-3700; *Telephone:* (202) 205-7760; *Fax:* (202) 720-3157; *Email:* [USCodex@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:USCodex@fsis.usda.gov).

For information pertaining to particular committees, contact the delegate of that committee. Documents pertaining to Codex and specific committee agendas are accessible via the Internet at <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/en/>. The U.S. Codex Office also maintains a Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food/topics/international-affairs/us-codex-alimentarius>.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The World Trade Organization (WTO) was established on January 1, 1995, as the common international institutional framework for the conduct of trade relations among its members in matters related to the Uruguay Round Trade Agreements. The WTO is the successor organization to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). United States membership in the WTO was approved and the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (Uruguay Round Agreements) was signed into law by the President on December 8, 1994, Public Law 103-465, 108 Stat. 4809. The Uruguay Round Agreements became effective, with respect to the United States, on January 1, 1995. The Uruguay

Round Agreements amended the Trade Agreements Act of 1979. Pursuant to section 491 of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979, as amended, the President is required to designate an agency to be "responsible for informing the public of the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standard-setting activities of each international standard-setting organization" (19 U.S.C. 2578). The main international standard-setting organizations are Codex, the World Organisation for Animal Health, and the International Plant Protection Convention. The President, pursuant to Proclamation No. 6780 of March 23, 1995, (60 FR 15845), designated the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the agency responsible for informing the public of the SPS standard-setting activities of each international standard-setting organization. The Secretary of Agriculture has delegated to the Office of Food Safety the responsibility to inform the public of the SPS standard-setting activities of Codex. The Office of Food Safety has, in turn, assigned the responsibility for informing the public of the SPS standard-setting activities of Codex to the U.S. Codex Office (USCO).

Codex was created in 1963 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Codex is the principal international organization for establishing standards for food. Through adoption of food standards, codes of practice, and other guidelines developed by its committees and by promoting their adoption and implementation by governments, Codex seeks to protect the health of consumers, ensure fair practices in the food trade, and promote coordination of food standards work undertaken by international governmental and nongovernmental organizations. In the United States, U.S. Codex activities are managed and carried out by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC); and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

As the agency responsible for informing the public of the SPS standard-setting activities of Codex, the Office of Food Safety publishes this notice in the **Federal Register** annually. Attachment 1 (Sanitary and Phytosanitary Activities of Codex) sets forth the following information:

1. The SPS standards under consideration or planned for consideration; and