UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

78-08 | 10/30/08

THIS NOTICE REISSUES THE CONTENT OF FSIS NOTICE 64-07 IN ITS ENTIRETY

SCHEDULING FOOD SAFETY ASSESSMENTS AND INTENSIFIED VERIFICATION TESTING

I. PURPOSE

This notice clarifies when District Office (DO) personnel are to schedule Enforcement, Investigations, and Analysis Officers (EIAOs) to conduct Food Safety Assessments (FSAs) and Intensified Verification Testing (IVT) in response to a positive pathogen result in FSIS product testing. Also, the instructions in this notice for scheduling FSAs for *Escherichia coli (E. coli)* O157:H7 positive results replace instructions found in FSIS Directive 10,010.1, Microbiological Testing Program for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 in Raw Ground Beef Products and Raw Ground Beef Components and Beef Patty Components. Finally, for purposes of this FSIS policy issuance, if another government entity (e.g., a Federal agency, such as the Agricultural Marketing Service, or a State public health laboratory whose results FSIS will use under FSIS Directive 10,000.1, Policy on Use of Results from Non-FSIS Laboratories) identifies *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*), *E. coli* O157:H7, or *Salmonella* in meat or poultry products, FSIS will conduct follow-up testing on the basis of this finding in the same way that it would if the finding were an FSIS result.

II. SCHEDULING OF AN FSA, IVT, AND VALIDATION CHECKLIST BY THE DO

A. The DO is to schedule an EIAO to conduct an FSA within 30 days of being notified:

1. of an FSIS ready-to-eat (RTE) product sample for ALLRTE, RTE001, or EM31 that tested positive for *Lm*, *E. coli* O157:H7, or *Salmonella*;

2. of an FSIS sample of raw beef product that tested positive for *E. coli* O157:H7;

3. that another government entity (see section I., above) has identified *Lm*, *E. coli* O157:H7, or *Salmonella* in RTE product or *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw beef product; or

4. by the in-plant inspection team that they have documented repetitive occurrences of noncompliance in the establishment's *Lm* control program, including sanitation issues.

B. The DO is to schedule within 30 days of being notified, in conjunction with the FSA in II. A. above, an EIAO to collect product, food contact, and environmental (non-food contact) samples (INTPROD, INTCONT, and INTENV, respectively) using the IVT methodology when:

1. the FSIS RTE product sample (ALLRTE or RTE001) tests positive for *Lm;*

2. a product sample from another government entity under section I, above tests positive for *Lm*; or

3. the in-plant inspection team has documented repetitive occurrences of noncompliance in the establishment's *Lm* control program, including sanitation issues.

NOTE: EIAOs conducting the IVT methodology should follow the sample selection and sample size direction contained in FSIS Directive 10,240.5.

C. The DO is to schedule within 30 days an EIAO to conduct an IVT to close out an action in which the DO has entered a deferral on a Notice of Intended Enforcement (NOIE), or put in abeyance a suspension, that was issued as a result of the establishment's failure to control *Lm.*

NOTE: While the DO is to schedule an FSA or IVT within 30 days of the notification as described in II. A., B., and C. above, the FSA or IVT need not take place within 30 days of this notification. The FSA or IVT should take place as soon as practicable.

D. If the DO personnel are unable to schedule an FSA or IVT within 30 days of the notification as described in II. A. or B., above, or to schedule an IVT to close out the action referred to in II. C., above, then the District Manager is to document the reason in the case file.

III. EIAO RESPONSIBILITIES

When an EIAO conducts:

1. an FSA or IVT for *Lm* in RTE products, he or she is to always complete the *Lm* validation checklist (Procedures for the Evaluation of Establishments Control Programs for *Listeria monocytogenes*) found at:

https://inside.fsis.usda.gov/fsis/emp/static/health/policy/compliance/compliance.jsp.

2. an IVT, he or she is to contact the Western laboratory via the Outlook "IVT Sample Scheduling" mailbox, approximately two weeks before the scheduled IVT sample collection date, unless circumstances require otherwise. This interaction with the laboratory will ensure that the laboratory is capable of handling, in a timely manner, the IVT samples and allows time for the laboratory to ship sample supplies to the appropriate site. The IVT Sample Scheduling mailbox will automatically forward the information to both the Sampling Supplies-Western Lab and the Sampling Forms-

Headquarters mailboxes. The e-mail to the "IVT Sample Scheduling" mailbox is to include:

a. the sample collection date and production shift;

b. the number of sample units required based on the number of production lines;

c. the establishment number;

d. the contact name and phone number for the EIAO conducting the IVT;

e. the location to send the forms and supplies (FedEx does not deliver to a post office box); and

f. requests for special supplies (e.g., larger gloves) or large shipping containers, if needed.

3. an FSA, he or she is to submit promptly the FSA report, including the checklist, when applicable.

Direct question regarding this notice to the Policy Development Division through askFSIS at http://askfsis.custhelp.com or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935.

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