



United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

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# FSIS Constituent Update

PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH THROUGH FOOD SAFETY & FOOD DEFENSE

June 28, 2013

## Equine Slaughter

FSIS has issued a grant of inspection to a horse slaughter establishment, Valley Meats Company, in Roswell, NM. FSIS expects two other applicants to be ready to receive grants of inspection for equine slaughter in the coming days.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) requires Federal inspection of amenable species when slaughtered for human food and prepared for commerce. Horses, mules, and other equines are among the livestock species that are amenable under the FMIA.

Beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2006, Congress prohibited the use of Federal funds to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel to perform ante-mortem inspection of equines intended to be slaughtered for human consumption (Section 794 of Pub. L. 109-97). Without ante-mortem inspection, no horse meat is eligible for the FSIS mark of inspection, and without the mark, no horse meat can move in commerce. Thus, the effect of this prohibition was to end the slaughter of equines in the United States. The prohibition continued from 2007 to 2011.

However, Congress has not continued this prohibition and did not include it for the use of appropriated funds in the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act (see Pub. L. 112-55). Therefore, if an establishment meets and complies with all of the FSIS requirements for equine slaughter and processing, FSIS must grant Federal inspection to the establishment.

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### Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following areas:

Canada  
Singapore

Complete information can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/international-affairs/exporting-products>.

## Compliance Guidelines for Selecting Microbiological Testing Laboratory and Validated Test Kit Tables Now Posted

FSIS is announcing the availability of final guidance, *Establishment Guidance for the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory*, for federally inspected establishments. This guidance is posted at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/464a4827-0c9a-4268-8651-b417bb6b-ba51/Guidance-Selection-Commercial-Private-Microbiological-Testing-lab-062013.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>. FSIS encourages establishments that process meat, poultry, or egg products to meet the criteria in the guidance when selecting a commercial or private microbiological testing laboratory to analyze samples and in determining their capability to generate accurate and reliable results.

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# ...Equine Slaughter

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Just as FSIS does for all other amenable species, at establishments that receive a grant of inspection to slaughter equines, FSIS will ensure compliance with all relevant statutes and regulations, including the FMIA, the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (9 CFR 417) and Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (9 CFR 416) regulations, and the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (21 U.S.C. 603(b)) and implementing regulations (9 CFR 313).

Among other measures to protect the public health, FSIS will test equine carcasses for illegal drug residues. Because of the particular concerns about the possibility of drug residues in equine carcasses, FSIS will conduct intensified residue testing at establishments that receive a grant of inspection to slaughter equines.

Under this framework, inspection program personnel will tag equines that appear unhealthy or have visible needle puncture marks as "U.S. Suspect" and perform inspector-generated testing. In addition, FSIS inspection program personnel will randomly select and sample a number of carcasses from every lot of equines that pass ante-mortem inspection. The rate at which we will randomly select carcasses for sampling will be above our normal rate until we have significant experience with equine slaughter. FSIS has issued instructions to inspection program personnel on inspection of equines in FSIS Directive 6130.1, available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/horses/6130.1.pdf>.

FSIS has modified several Chemistry Laboratory Guidebook Methods to add equine muscle. These methods include: Screening for Phenylbutazone by ELISA; Screening for Chloramphenicol by ELISA; Screening and Confirmation for Aminoglycosides by LC-MS-MS; Screening for Pesticides by LC-MS-MS and GC-MS-MS; Identification of Poisons and Toxins by GC-MS; and Screening and Confirmation of Animal Drug Residues by UHPLC-MS-MS, which can analyze for multiple drug classes.

In addition, FSIS methods for other residues are available for equine. They include: Determination of Arsenic by Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy; Determination of Ivermectin, Doramectin, and Moxidectin by HPLC; and Liquid Chromatography/Atmospheric Pressure Chemical Ionization Mass Spectrometric (LC/APCI/MS) Confirmation of Ivermectin, Doramectin and Moxidectin.

To review the revisions to the guidebook, visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/science/laboratories-and-procedures/guidebooks-and-methods/chemistry-laboratory-guidebook>.

Because of FSIS' stringent inspection process, testing capabilities, and labeling requirements, American consumers should not be concerned that horse meat will be labeled and sold as the meat of another species, as happened earlier this year in other countries.

Horses are not allowed to be slaughtered and horse meat is not allowed to be processed in the same facility as other species in the United States.

More information on FSIS' inspection of equine slaughter can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/horses/horses.html>.

## Follow Us On Twitter

Find food safety information for at-risk people, along with tips and resources to keep consumers and other interested groups informed of the latest agency news and events. Follow FSIS on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/USDAFoodSafety](http://www.twitter.com/USDAFoodSafety).

## Also Tweet en Español

The FSIS Spanish language Twitter feed keeps consumers and other interested communities informed of the latest agency news and events and provides useful food safety tips.

Follow FSIS' Spanish Twitter account at [www.twitter.com/usdafoodsafes\\_es](http://www.twitter.com/usdafoodsafes_es).

*FSIS Constituent Update* is prepared by the Congressional and Public Affairs Office

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# ...Compliance Guidelines

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In addition, FSIS has posted tables of validated test kits available to regulated establishments to test for the presence of the relevant pathogens or indicator organisms of interest (Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC); *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Listeria* species; and *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* species) in meat, poultry and processed egg products. These tables are intended to be informational and are not an endorsement or approval of any particular method by the agency. The tables are available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/909c8279-6865-424d-ab7a-e1f165646c63/Validated-Test-Kit-Spreadsheet.xls?MOD=AJPERES>. FSIS intends to update these tables on a quarterly basis.

## "At Least Equal To" Compliance Guideline for State Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs for Laboratory Methods Now Posted

FSIS is announcing the availability of the "At Least Equal To" Compliance Guideline for State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs for Laboratory Methods. This guideline supplements the guidance material in Component 3 - Product Sampling, of the "At Least Equal To" Guidelines for State Meat and Poultry Cooperative Inspection Programs. It provides additional recommendations on product sampling, laboratory methods and quality assurance.

FSIS has posted this guidance at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/d3382b4f-27df-4e69-9744-ea8d73a2d603/At-Least-Equal-to-Guide-MPI-Programs-Lab-Methods.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

In addition, FSIS has forwarded this guideline to all states participating in Cooperative State MPI Programs.

## FSIS Policy Updates

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. All notices and directives are available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations>. The following policy update was recently issued:

**Notice 41-13, Verification of Establishment's Address for the Purpose of Receiving FSIS Sampling Supplies**

**Notice 42-13, Length of Service April, May and June 2013**

## 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&As. Visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/> to view recently posted topics.

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