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USDA Issues Proposed Rule for Livestock Mandatory Reporting

The U.S. Department of Agriculture today issued the proposed regulation to re-establish the Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR) program. On April 2, 2001, the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) implemented the LMR program as required by the Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act of 1999 (1999 Act). The statutory authority for the program lapsed on September 30, 2005. In October 2006, Congress enacted legislation to reauthorize the 1999 Act through September 30, 2010 (Reauthorization Act), and to amend the swine reporting requirements of the 1999 Act. The Reauthorization Act separates the reporting requirements for sows and boars from barrows and gilts, among other changes. This rulemaking is necessary to re-establish the regulatory authority for the program's continued operation and incorporate the swine reporting changes contained within the Reauthorization Act, as well as enhance the program's overall effectiveness and efficiency based on AMS' experience in the administration of the program over the past six years. The full text of the proposed rule will be published in the August 8, 2007 *Federal Register*. Comments will be due by September 7, 2007. Comments may be submitted on the Internet at: www.regulations.gov. Written comments can be sent to Livestock and Grain Market News Branch, Docket No. LS-07-01, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 2619-S, Washington, DC, 20250-0252, or by facsimile to 202-690-3732. Copies of the proposed rule and additional information can be found at: www.ams.usda.gov/lsmarketnews.

FSIS Posts Second Progress Report on *Salmonella*

On August 3, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) posted to its website the second quarterly progress report on *Salmonella* testing of selected raw meat and poultry products. This report provides preliminary data for the months of April through June 2007. In February 2006, FSIS posted in the *Federal Register* its intention to publish results quarterly and to change how it used the results from its *Salmonella* verification sampling program for meat and poultry establishments as a way to enhance public health protection. FSIS is now providing results from individual *Salmonella* verification sample tests the agency regularly conducts at meat and poultry establishments to establishments that have asked to be informed of various tests. The quarterly report is available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/data_collection_&_reports/index.asp.

Petersen Named "Food Hygiene Veterinarian of the Year"

The American Association of Food Hygiene Veterinarians (AAFHV) has chosen Dr. Kenneth Petersen as its "Food Hygiene Veterinarian of the Year." Since 1989, Petersen has worked for FSIS in positions of increasing responsibility culminating in his appointment in 2005 as Assistant Administrator of the Office of Field Operations. Dr. Candace Jacobs, president of AAFHV said, "Dr. Petersen's accomplishments have brought stature to his agency and the profession and we wanted to acknowledge his contributions that have significantly influenced food safety." Petersen is a member of numerous professional organizations and is a diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine. He received his doctorate of veterinary medicine from the University of Illinois and a master's of public health from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland.

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Smith Named Acting Administrator of APHIS

Bruce Knight, undersecretary for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s marketing and regulatory programs mission area, recently announced the appointment of Cindy Smith as the new acting administrator for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). “Cindy has been an integral part of the APHIS team for many years, and I am pleased that she has accepted this position,” said Knight. “Her leadership and management experience are extremely valuable as APHIS continues to carry out its mission of protecting the health and value of American agriculture and its natural resources.” As acting administrator, Smith will manage one of USDA’s most multi-faceted agencies, which includes programs that are critical to the protection of America’s livestock, plants and food supply. Smith is acting as a replacement for Dr. Ron DeHaven, who retired on August 3, after 28 years with APHIS. DeHaven served as administrator since 2004. Smith began her career with APHIS in 1979 after graduating high school. Throughout her years, Smith has gained diverse experience through a number of different positions, including plant protection and quarantine, wildlife services (WS) and biotechnology regulatory services (BRS). Beginning in 2002, she served as deputy administrator for BRS and played a major role in shaping the agency’s biotechnology regulatory structure and strengthening the agency’s biotechnology regulations. From 2001 to 2002, Smith was the associate deputy administrator for WS, which provides federal leadership and expertise in resolving conflicts caused by wildlife. Since April, Smith has been APHIS’ associate administrator. Smith earned both her bachelor of science degree in microbiology and her masters degree in business management from the University of Maryland.

FSIS Relocates Label Distribution, Docket OPPED Offices

FSIS is relocating three Washington, D.C., Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development offices from the Cotton Annex building to the South Building. The Label Distribution Office will be relocated to Room 2542 South, and the docket and physical Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Reading Room will be relocated to Room 2534 South. The current public offices at 300 12th Street SW, Washington, D.C., will be temporarily closed on August 17, while records, equipment and furniture are being relocated and services are being re-established for the public. The offices will re-open to the public on August 21, at 8 AM, in their new South Building locations. Effective August 21, correspondence about label applications sent via the U.S. Postal Service and other express mail services should be addressed as follows: USDA, FSIS, OPPED, Room 2542 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250. Inquiries or correspondence about label applications may be faxed to the Label Distribution Office or the Labeling Compliance Team at 202- 205-0145 or 202-205-0271. Please provide a cover sheet indicating the reason for the fax. Label applications from small businesses will be accepted, provided the labeling is legible. Call 202-205-0623 or 202-205-0279 with questions about labels or labeling.



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UK Officials Suspect Lab in FMD Outbreak

Britain banned exports of livestock, meat and milk Saturday after an outbreak of highly infectious foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in southern England and halted the movement of cattle, sheep, goats and pigs nationwide in a bid to prevent the spread of the virus. The disease was detected on a farm in Surrey, about 30 miles southwest of London, and the viral strain found on the affected farm was identical to one used at the nearby Institute for Animal Health's Pirbright Laboratory, according to Britain's environment agency. The government-funded lab currently researches vaccines for the virus. Martin Shirley, director of the Institute for Animal Health, said the strain had been in "limited use" within the institute's own laboratory in the past four weeks, but an investigation had found no breaches of biosecurity procedures. The government's chief veterinarian, Debby Reynolds, ordered a new six-mile protection zone to be set up around the farm and the lab. New Prime Minister Gordon Brown vowed to work "night and day" to avoid a repeat of a 2001 epidemic when 7 million cattle were culled and the farming industry was devastated. "Our first priority has been to act quickly and decisively," said Brown, who chaired a meeting of the government's crisis committee, COBRA, on Saturday. "I can assure people ... we are doing everything in our power to look at the scientific evidence and to get to the bottom of what has happened and then to eradicate this disease," he said. A total of 97 animals have been culled - 64 from the infected premises, plus 33 from two contact premises. The carcasses have been disposed of by incineration. As part of the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) contingency plan and in order to ensure full preparedness, 300,000 doses of strain-specific vaccine have been ordered from the UK's vaccine bank, although no decision has been made on using vaccine. As expected, countries around the world, including the U.S, have banned meat and meat product imports from Great Britain.

Briefly . . .

Japan Reviews U.S. Beef Safety Data: Japan is studying data provided by the United States on U.S. beef safety as it considers relaxing its rules on beef imports, Japanese Agriculture Ministry officials said today. Tokyo currently only allows American beef from cattle aged 20 months or younger, as a precaution against BSE, but it has started to take steps which industry officials believe could lead to raising the age limit to 30 months. The data was provided at a two-day meeting of Japanese and U.S. experts late last week. According to media reports, Japan could relax the import restrictions as early as the end of August.

S. Korean Blocks U.S. Beef. Ag Minister Resigns: South Korea's agriculture minister offered to step down today after the ministry raised tension with the U.S. last week by essentially blocking American beef imports. The Agriculture Ministry halted quarantine inspections of American beef shipments Wednesday, effectively suspending U.S. beef imports, over BSE concerns after another recent U.S. beef shipment reportedly contained a vertebral column. President Roh Moo-hyun accepted the resignation of Park Hong-soo, who began his term in January of 2005. Park is resigning for "personal reasons," and will stay at the post until his successor is found, a ministry spokesman said. The spokesman denied speculation that the resignation was linked to the beef dispute.

FSIS to Hold Public Meeting on Poultry Slaughter Inspection: FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice on July 31 titled, "Public Health-Based Inspection System in Poultry Slaughter." This notice announced that FSIS will hold a public meeting on August 7 to address the scientific foundations for future decision making including how to address *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella* and other public health concerns. The meeting will be held from 9 AM to 1 AM at George Mason University, School of Public Policy, 3401 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22201. The agency is accepting comments by e-mail to riskbasedinspection@fsis.usda.gov.

Register now for "Developing & Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry"

to be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, September 18-20, 2007, hosted by SMA and the Texas A&M Department of Animal Science. The course curriculum provides hands-on training in developing a HACCP program for all types of meat slaughtering and processing facilities. The course includes case studies and small working group sessions to provide participants with a working knowledge of HACCP and enable them to incorporate HACCP principles in their own facilities. Course instructors continuously update their materials to provide the latest information in government policy.

**Registration forms are available on our website at
www.southwestmeat.org, or by contacting the SMA office.**

Sign up today!