

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

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# FSIS NOTICE

23-14

5/7/14

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## NOTIFYING RETAILERS OF THE FSIS BEST PRACTICES GUIDANCE FOR CONTROLLING *LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES* (LM) IN RETAIL DELICATESSENS

### I. PURPOSE

This notice informs the Office of Investigation, Enforcement and Audit (OIEA), Compliance and Investigations Division (CID) Investigators that the [FSIS Best Practices Guidance for Controlling \*Listeria monocytogenes\* \(Lm\) in Retail Delicatessens](#) is available. Investigators are to inform management at retail firms that slice or prepare deli products that the guideline is available as part of the outreach they perform during in-commerce surveillance activities.

### II. BACKGROUND

This guidance document provides specific recommendations that retailers can take in the delicatessen (deli) area to control *Lm* contamination of ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry products. The guidance highlights recommendations based on an evaluation of retail conditions and practices documented in the [Interagency Risk Assessment--\*Listeria monocytogenes\* in Retail Delicatessens](#) (Interagency Retail *Lm* Risk Assessment). The guidance includes information from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code, scientific literature, other guidance documents, and lessons learned from FSIS verification sampling and from reviewing sanitation programs for *Lm* controls in meat and poultry processing establishments. It is important to note that this guidance does not replace the 2013 FDA Food Code or FSIS regulations. This guidance sets out recommendations rather than requirements.

### III. INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Investigators are to inform the firm's management that the new guidance is available when conducting in-commerce surveillance at retail firms that slice or prepare deli products. Investigators are to provide this information as part of the education and outreach they perform to provide regulatory food safety, food defense, and other compliance information to in-commerce businesses, owners and operators, employees, and others.

B. Investigators are to inform the firm that the guideline includes the following information:

1. Actions identified by the Interagency Retail *Lm* Risk Assessment that can decrease the predicted risk of listeriosis from deli products;
2. Information from the FDA Food Code, scientific literature, other guidance documents, and lessons learned from meat and poultry establishments that retailers can use to control *Lm*;

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**DISTRIBUTION:** Electronic

**NOTICE EXPIRES:** 5/1/15

**OPI:** OPPD

3. Steps retailers can take to help ensure that deli products are maintained under sanitary conditions that do not allow *Lm* adulteration of the product; and
4. A self-assessment tool that retailers can use to determine what practices they are currently using and what new practices to adopt to control *Lm*.

C. Investigators are to inform the firm that FSIS will be accepting comments on the guideline until June 20, 2014, and they can be submitted following the instructions in the guideline.

#### IV. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice through [askFSIS](#). When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided:

- Subject Field: Enter **Notice 23-14**  
Question Field: **Enter your question with as much detail as possible.**  
Product Field: Select **General Inspection Policy** from the drop-down menu.  
Category Field: Select **Sampling: *Listeria*** from the drop-down menu.  
Policy Arena: Select **Domestic (U.S.) Only** from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press **Continue** and at the next screen press **Finish Submitting Question**.



Assistant Administrator  
Office of Policy and Program Development