

2020 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

Agency-Wide.....	2
Purpose Statement.....	2
Available Funds and Staff Years	5
Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Years	6
Vehicle Fleet.....	7
Shared Funding Projects	8
Account 1: Salaries and Expenses	10
Lead-Off Tabular Statement	10
Appropriations Language.....	10
Project Statement	11
Justifications	12
Proposed Legislation.....	16
Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years	17
Classification by Objects	19
Status of Programs	20
Agency-Wide Performance.....	48
Summary of Performance	48

AGENCY-WIDE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Secretary of Agriculture established the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) on June 17, 1981, pursuant to legislative authority contained in 5 U.S.C. 301 that permits the Secretary to issue regulations governing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The mission of FSIS is to protect the public's health by ensuring the safety of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. FSIS is composed of two major inspection programs: (1) Meat and Poultry Inspection and (2) Egg Products Inspection.

The Meat and Poultry Inspection Program is authorized by the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) as amended and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA). The purpose of the program is to ensure that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled through inspection and regulation of these products so that they are suitable for commercial distribution for human consumption. FSIS also enforces the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act through the program, which requires that all livestock at Federally-inspected establishments be handled and slaughtered in a humane way.

FSIS conducts inspection activities at Federally-inspected meat and poultry establishments; and for State programs, the agency ensures that State meat and poultry inspection programs have standards that are at least equivalent to Federal standards. FSIS also ensures that meat and poultry products imported to the United States are produced under standards equivalent to U.S. inspection standards and facilitates the certification of regulated products.

FSIS' science-based inspection system, known as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system, places emphasis on the identification, prevention, and control of foodborne hazards. HACCP requirements include meeting sanitation, facility, and operational standards, and other prerequisite programs to control pathogen contamination and produce safe and unadulterated food.

The Egg Products Inspection Program is authorized by the Egg Product Inspection Act (EPIA). The program's purpose is to ensure that liquid, frozen and dried egg products are safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled through continuous mandatory inspection of egg processing plants that manufacture these products. FSIS also ensures processed egg products imported to the United States are produced under standards equivalent to U.S. inspection standards and facilitates the certification of exported regulated products.

During 2018, the agency maintained headquarters offices in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area; 10 district offices; the Policy Development Division in Omaha, Nebraska; laboratories at Athens, Georgia, St. Louis, Missouri, and Anaheim, California; the Financial Processing Center in Des Moines, Iowa; the Human Resources Field Office in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and a nationwide network of inspection personnel in over 6,462 Federally regulated establishments in 50 States, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. Included are 350 establishments operating under Talmadge-Aiken Cooperative Agreements. A Talmadge-Aiken plant is a Federal plant with State inspection program personnel operating as Federal inspectors under Federal supervisors. Much of the agency's work is conducted in cooperation with Federal, State, and municipal agencies, as well as private industry.

As of September 30, 2018, the agency employment totaled 8,773 permanent full-time employees, including 578 in the Washington, DC area and 8,195 in the field. Altogether, FSIS employed 9,010 Full Time Equivalents (FTE's) as of September 30, 2018. This included other-than-permanent employees in addition to permanent full-time ones. FSIS funding is broken out into the following categories:

1. Federal Food Safety and Inspection: Expenses associated with operations at all Federally inspected meat, poultry and egg product establishments.
2. Public Health Data Communications Infrastructure System (PHDCIS): Expenses associated with providing public health communications and information systems infrastructure and connectivity.
3. International Food Safety and Inspection: Expenses associated with import and export operations and certifications.
4. State Food Safety and Inspection: Expenses associated with State inspected establishments and state-run programs.

OIG and GAO Reports**Table FSIS-1. Completed OIG Reports**

ID	Date	Title	Result
24601-0004-21	08/12/2015	FSIS Ground Turkey Inspection and Safety Protocols	The last remaining recommendation from this audit was closed.
24601-0001-23	08/28/2015	Implementation of the Public Health Information System for Domestic Inspection	The last three remaining recommendations were closed.
50099-0002-21	03/31/2017	FSIS' Process for Handling Vehicle Misuse Complaints	Three out of the four recommendations were closed. One remains open.
24016-0001-23	06/12/2017	FSIS Follow-up on the 2007 and 2008 Audit Initiatives	Nine of the eighteen recommendations were closed. Nine remain open.
24601-0005-31	06/12/2017	FSIS' Controls Over Declaring Allergens on Product Labels	All twelve recommendations are now closed.
24601-0002-21	10/02/2017	Evaluation of FSIS' Equivalency Assessments of Exporting Countries	All eight recommendations are now closed.
50701-0001-21	09/11/2018	USDA Agency Activities for Agroterrorism Prevention, Detection and Response	Three recommendations directed at FSIS are open, one of which is pending closure.
50601-0003-23	09/28/2018	Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization's (OSDBU) Control Over the Eligibility of Contract Recipients	FSIS met with OIG in March 2018 to verbally respond to questions and provide follow-up information. No recommendations were direct at FSIS.

Table FSIS-2. In-Progress OIG Reports

ID	Date	Title	Result
24601-0006-31	n.d.	FSIS National Office Oversight of the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS)	The final report is expected in early 2019 containing two recommendations directed at FSIS.
24601-0003-21	n.d.	Controls Over Imported Meat and Poultry Products	OIG is continuing its audit work.
24601-0002-23	n.d.	Controls Over Meat, Poultry, and Egg Product Labels	OIG is continuing its audit work.
24601-0003-22	n.d.	Compliance with Written Recall Procedures	OIG expects to issue the discussion draft in December 2018.
24601-0002-22	n.d.	Cooperative Interstate Shipment Program	OIG expects to issue the discussion draft in December 2018.
50501-0021-12	n.d.	Data Encryption Controls Over PII on USDA IT Systems	OIG will hold the FSIS closeout meeting in December 2018 and expects to issue the discussion draft in January 2019.

Table FSIS-3. Completed GAO Reports

ID	Date	Title	Result
GAO-14-744 (361507)	10/20/2014	Food Safety: USDA Needs to Strengthen Its Approach to Protecting Human Health from Pathogens in Poultry Products	GAO's final report contained four recommendations directed at FSIS. All four recommendations have been closed.
GAO-15-38 (361446)	11/06/2014	Food Safety: FDA and USDA Should Strengthen Pesticide Residue Monitoring Programs and Further Disclose Monitoring Limitations	GAO's final report contained one recommendation directed at FSIS, which is currently open.
GAO-15-180 (361560)	12/18/2014	Federal Food Safety Oversight: Additional Actions Needed to Improve Planning and Collaboration	GAO's final report contained one recommendation directed at USDA and it is pending closure.

ID	Date	Title	Result
GAO-16-305 (291264)	03/21/2016	High-Containment Laboratories: Comprehensive and Up-To-Date Policies and Stronger Oversight Mechanisms	GAO's final report contained one recommendation directed at FSIS and it is currently open. FSIS will comply with changes in Departmental policies concerning four recommendations directed at USDA.
GAO-17-192 (100267)	03/16/2017	Antibiotic Resistance: More Information Needed to Oversee Use of Medically Important Drugs in Food Animals	GAO's final report contained one recommendation directed at FSIS, which is currently open.
GAO-17-443 (100542)	10/02/2017	Imported Seafood Safety: FDA and FSIS Could Strengthen Efforts to Prevent Unsafe Drug Residues	GAO's final report contained three recommendations directed at FSIS and all are currently opened.
GAO-18-12 (100832)	12/07/2017	Workplace Safety and Health: Better Outreach, Collaboration, and Information Needed to Help Protect Workers at Meat and Poultry Plants	The report contains two recommendations directed at FSIS and both are currently open.
GAO-18-272 (100940)	03/19/2018	Food Safety: USDA Should Take Further Action to Reduce Pathogens in Meat and Poultry Products.	GAO's final report contained three recommendations directed at FSIS and all are currently open.
GAO-18-422 (102093)	09/20/2018	Biological Select Agents and Toxins: Actions Needed to Improve Management of DOD's Biosafety and Biosecurity Program	GAO's final report did not contain any recommendations directed at USDA.

Table FSIS-4. In-Progress GAO Reports

ID	Date	Title	Result
(103089)	n.d.	Cell Cultured Food Technologies	This audit was initiated in October 2018.
(102595)	n.d.	Date Labels on Packaged Food	FSIS provided written responses to GAO questions and held meetings with them in March-April 2018 to verbally respond to questions. The final report is expected in the January-March 2019 timeframe.
(102509)	n.d.	Federal Preparedness for Responding to Antimicrobial-Resistant Pathogens	FSIS has not been contacted to provide input for this audit since it began in February 2018.
(102051)	n.d.	USDA Preparedness for Foot-And-Mouth Disease Outbreak	FSIS provided technical comments to the Statement of Facts, but otherwise has not been contacted since this audit began in June 2017.
(102874)	n.d.	Alternatives to Animal Research	FSIS has not been contacted since this audit began in July 2018.
(102425)	n.d.	FDA Import Alerts	FSIS has only been contacted once as part of this ongoing audit.
(103113)	n.d.	National Biodefense Strategy	GAO entrance conference with USDA agencies was held in December 2018.

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND STAFF YEARS**Table FSIS-5. Available Funds and Staff Years (thousands of dollars, staff years (SY))**

Item	2017 Actual	SY	2018 Actual	SY	2019 Estimate	SY	2020 Budget	SY
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	\$1,032,062	9,243	\$1,056,844	8,902	\$1,056,844	9,224	\$1,045,320	9,148
Transfers In	90	-	60	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers Out	-	-	-400	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted Appropriation.....	1,032,152	9,243	1,056,504	8,902	1,056,844	9,224	1,045,320	9,148
Balance Available, SOY	8,077	-	7,830	-	7,659	-	-	-
Other Adjustments (Net).....	7,437	-	1,802	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	1,047,666	9,243	1,066,136	8,902	1,064,503	9,224	1,045,320	9,148
Lapsing Balances	-273	-	-158	-	-	-	-	-
Balance Available, EOY	-7,830	-	-7,659	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Obligations, FSIS.....	1,039,563	9,243	1,058,319	8,902	1,064,503	9,224	1,045,320	9,148
Ob. Under Other USDA Appr.:								
APHIS	181	-	126	-	-	-	-	-
ARS.....	2	-	8	-	-	-	-	-
CODEX.....	-	-	1,714	-	-	-	-	-
FNCS	300	-	210	-	214	-	218	-
GIPS.....	60	-	60	-	-	-	-	-
GPSA	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OCR	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OGC	29	-	41	-	-	-	-	-
OSEC	45	-	80	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Other USDA	711	-	2,239	-	214	-	218	-
Total, Agriculture Appropriations	1,040,274	9,243	1,060,558	8,902	1,064,717	9,224	1,045,538	9,148
Other Federal Funds:								
FDA, <i>Salmonella</i> , <i>Campylobacter</i> , <i>E.coli</i> , and <i>Enterococcus</i>	600	-	600	-	-	-	-	-
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	28	-	21	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Other Federal.....	628	-	621	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Federal Funds:								
Meat, Poultry and Egg Products								
Inspection.....	220,530	29	219,968	28	224,367	28	228,855	28
Accredited Labs	309	-	214	-	218	-	223	-
Trust Funds	26,244	82	14,024	80	14,304	80	14,591	80
Total, Non-Federal	247,083	111	234,206	108	238,890	108	243,668	108
Total, FSIS	1,287,985	9,354	1,295,385	9,010	1,303,607	9,332	1,289,206	9,256

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND STAFF YEARS*Table FSIS-6. Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Years*

Item	D.C.	Field	2017 Actual Total	D.C.	Field	2018 Actual Total	D.C.	Field	2019 Estimate Total	D.C.	Field	2020 Budget Total
SES	20	2	22	19	2	21	19	2	21	19	2	21
SL	3	2	5	3	2	5	3	2	5	3	2	5
GS-15	68	29	97	66	29	95	66	29	95	66	29	95
GS-14	212	97	309	209	97	306	209	97	306	209	97	306
GS-13	189	476	665	189	476	665	189	476	665	189	476	665
GS-12	93	1,169	1,262	92	1,169	1,261	92	1,169	1,261	92	1,169	1,261
GS-11	28	112	140	28	112	140	28	112	140	28	112	140
GS-10	3	490	493	3	490	493	3	490	493	3	490	493
GS-9	39	2,154	2,193	39	2,154	2,193	39	2,154	2,193	39	2,133	2,172
GS-8	8	985	993	7	985	992	7	985	992	7	975	982
GS-7	22	2,894	2,916	22	2,894	2,916	22	2,894	2,916	22	2,849	2,871
GS-6	6	25	31	6	25	31	6	25	31	6	25	31
GS-5	-	447	447	-	447	447	-	447	447	-	447	447
GS-4	4	7	11	4	7	11	4	7	11	4	7	11
GS-3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-2	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1
Total Permanent	695	8,890	9,585	687	8,890	9,577	687	8,890	9,577	687	8,814	9,501
Unfilled, EOY	74	217	291	109	695	804	80	495	575	85	483	568
Total Perm. FT EOY	621	8,673	9,294	578	8,195	8,773	607	8,395	9,002	602	8,331	8,933
Staff Year Est	648	8,706	9,354	590	8,420	9,010	595	8,737	9,332	596	8,660	9,256

VEHICLE FLEET**Motor Vehicle Fleet**

FSIS inspects in 6,462 meat, poultry, and egg products plants and import establishments located throughout the United States. A large number of FSIS inspection personnel have responsibilities in multiple plants and work “patrol/relief assignments” traveling from plant to plant on a daily basis. Depending on the inspector’s proximity to given assignments and remote locations, inspectors may be required to travel over larger geographical areas.

All FSIS vehicles are leased from the General Service Administration’s (GSA) fleet except for a vehicle that the agency purchased to use as a mobile food safety exhibit. The Food Safety Discovery Zone Vehicle travels throughout the United States visiting schools, State fairs, and similar local events. FSIS uses the Discovery Zone Vehicle to educate consumers about the risks associated with mishandling food and the steps they can take to reduce their risk of foodborne illness. FSIS expects to retire the Discovery Zone Vehicle in FY 2020.

Table FSIS-7. Size, Composition, and Annual Costs of Motor Vehicle Fleet^a

Fiscal Year	Sedans and Station Wagons	Lt. Trucks, SUVs, and Vans (4x2)	Lt. Trucks, SUVs, and Vans (4x4)	Medium Duty Vehicles	Heavy Duty Vehicles	Total Vehicles	Annual Operating Costs
2017	2,229	68	54	1	1	2,353	\$12,463
Change	+43	+4	+3	+1	-	+51	+623
2018	2,272	72	57	2	1	2,404	13,086
Change	-	+6	-	-	-	+6	+261
2019	2,272	78	57	2	1	2,410	13,347
Change	+50	+7	-	-	-1	+56	+587
2020	2,322	85	57	2	0	2,466	13,934

^a Vehicle count include those owned by agency and leased from commercial sources or GSA.

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS**Table FSIS-8. Shared Funding Projects (dollars in thousands)**

Item	2017	2018	2019	2020
Working Capital Fund:				
HR Enterprise System Management.....	\$73	\$95	\$115	\$123
Material Management Service.....	3,817	3,372	3,377	3,109
Integrated Procurement Systems	204	209	207	218
Procurement Operations Services.....	17	19	11	8
Mail and Reproduction Management	978	863	845	778
Subtotal	5,089	4,558	4,556	4,236
Creative Media and Broadcast Center	281	435	462	442
Correspondence Management	339	305	288	286
Financial Management Systems	4,660	5,066	5,141	5,095
Internal Control Support Services	101	118	76	76
National Finance Center	2,701	2,912	-	-
Subtotal	8,082	8,836	8,733	8,792
Client Technology Services.....	3,991	3,865	4,700	4,545
National Information Technology Center.....	5,384	5,925	7,033	7,033
Telecommunications Services	2,120	2,912	2,765	2,893
Subtotal	11,495	12,154	18,521	18,395
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	24,666	25,549	31,809	31,424
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
1890's USDA Initiatives	320	-	-	-
Advisory Committee Liaison Services	3	3	4	4
Agency Partnership Outreach.....	-	672	693	693
Classified National Security Information	67	-	-	-
Continuity of Operations Planning	176	-	-	-
Emergency Operations Center.....	202	-	-	-
Facility and Infrastructure Review and Assessment	39	-	-	-
Faith-Based Initiatives and Neighborhood Partnerships.....	35	-	-	-
Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program	169	-	-	-
Honor Awards	-	2	5	5
Human Resources Self-Service Dashboard	51	53	53	58
Human Resources Transformation	144	80	-	-
Identity Access Management.....	581	-	-	-
Medical Services	44	41	30	30
Office of Customer Experience	-	173	277	335
People's Garden	56	43	-	-
Personnel and Document Security	-	167	157	157
Personnel Security Branch.....	91	-	-	-
Security Detail.....	290	399	409	409
Security Operations	-	936	937	937
TARGET Center.....	127	118	102	102
USDA 1994 Program	69	-	-	-
USDA Enterprise Data Analytics Services.....	-	-	-	478
Virtual University.....	174	91	-	-
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs.....	2,638	2,778	2,667	3,208

E-Gov:

Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business.....	7	7	7	7
Enterprise Human Resources Integration	174	174	174	174
E-Rulemaking.....	46	57	47	47
Financial Management Line of Business.....	8	8	8	8
Geospatial Line of Business	13	13	13	13
Human Resources Line of Business	24	25	25	25
Integrated Acquisition Environment.....	13	13	15	15
Total, E-Gov.....	285	297	289	289
Agency Total.....	27,589	3,075	2,956	3,497

ACCOUNT 1: SALARIES AND EXPENSES

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table FSIS-9. Lead-Off Tabular Statement

Item	Amount
2019 Annualized Continuing Resolution	\$1,056,844,000
Change in Appropriation.....	-11,524,000
Budget Estimate, 2020	<u>1,045,320,000</u>

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

The appropriations language follows (new language underscored):

For necessary expenses to carry out services authorized by the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, the Egg Products Inspection Act, including not to exceed \$50,000 for representation allowances and for expenses pursuant to section 8 of the Act approved August 3, 1956 (7 U.S.C. 1766), \$1,045,320,000; and in addition, \$1,000,000 may be credited to this account from fees collected for the cost of laboratory accreditation as authorized by section 1357 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 138f): Provided that funds provided for the Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure System shall remain available until expended: Provided further, that no fewer than 148 full-time equivalent positions shall be employed during fiscal year 2020 for purposes dedicated solely to inspections and enforcement related to the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act: Provided further, that this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

PROJECT STATEMENT

Table FSIS-10. Project Statement (thousands of dollars, staff years (SY))

Item	2017		2018		2019		Inc. or Dec.	Chg. Key	SY	2020	
	Actual	SY	Actual	SY	Estimate	SY				Budget	SY
Discretionary Appropriations:											
Federal Food Safety & Inspection.....	\$915,836	9,095	\$943,484	8,762	\$943,824	9,084	-\$16,524	(1)	-76	\$927,300	9,008
Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure System (PHDCIS).....	34,583		34,580		34,580		-	-	-	34,580	
International Food Safety & Inspection	16,488	120	16,758	120	16,758	120	-	-	-	16,758	120
State Food Safety & Inspection.....	61,573	20	61,682	20	61,682	20	+5,000	(2)	-	66,682	20
Codex Alimentarius	3,672	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	1,032,152	9,243	1,056,504	8,902	1,056,844	9,224	-11,524		-76	1,045,320	9,148
Rsc, Trns, Other (Net).....	-90	-	340	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sequestration.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	1,032,062	9,243	1,056,844	8,902	1,056,844	9,224	-11,524		-76	1,045,320	9,148
Transfers In:	90		60				-	-	-		
Transfers Out:			-400				-	-	-		
Transferred Balances.....							-	-	-		
Recoveries, Other (Net).....	7,437		1,802	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Bal. Available, SOY.....	8,077		7,830	-	7,659	-	-7,659		-		
Total Available.....	1,047,666	9,243	1,066,136	8,902	1,064,503	9,224	-19,183		-76	1,045,320	9,148
Lapsing Balances	-273		-158				-	-	-		
Bal. Available, EOY	-7,830		-7,659				-	-	-		
Total Obligations.....	1,039,563	9,243	1,058,319	8,902	1,064,503	9,224	-19,183		-76	1,045,320	9,148

JUSTIFICATIONS

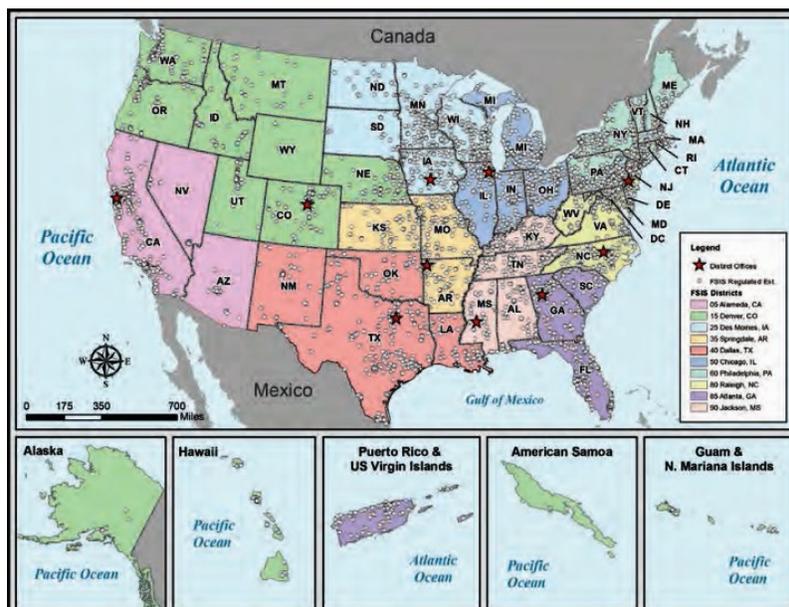
Food Safety and Inspection Service

The numbered justifications items are keyed to the Change Key (Chg. Key) column on the Project Statement.

FSIS provides in-plant inspection of all domestic processing and slaughter establishments preparing meat, poultry, and processed egg products for sale or distribution into commerce, as well as surveillance and investigation of all meat, poultry, and egg product facilities. FSIS inspection program personnel are present for all domestic slaughter operations, inspect each livestock and poultry carcass, and inspect operations at each processing establishment at least once per shift. In addition to in-plant personnel in Federally inspected establishments, FSIS employs a number of other field personnel, such as laboratory technicians and investigators. Program investigators conduct surveillance, investigations, and other activities at food warehouses, distribution centers, retail stores, and other businesses operating in commerce that store, handle, distribute, transport, or sell meat, poultry, or processed egg products to the consuming public. FSIS ensures the safety of imported products through a three-part equivalence process which includes (1) analysis of an applicant country's legal and regulatory structure, (2) initial and periodic on-site equivalence auditing of the country's food regulatory systems, and (3) continual point-of-entry re-inspection of products received from the exporting country. FSIS also has cooperative agreements with 27 States that operate intrastate meat and poultry inspection programs. FSIS conducts reviews of these State programs to ensure that they are "at least equal to" the Federal program. Additionally, FSIS regulates interstate commerce through cooperative agreements with five States that already have meat and poultry inspection (MPI) programs that are identical to the Federal program and allows those establishments to ship products across state lines and also, potentially, to export them to foreign countries.

To carry out these Congressional mandates, FSIS:

- Employs 9,010 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs as of September 30, 2018). This includes other-than-permanent employees, in addition to, permanent full-time employees.
- Regulates over 250,000 different meat, poultry, and egg products
- Regulates operations at approximately 6,462 Federally regulated establishments.
- Ensures public health requirements are met in establishments that each year slaughter or process:
 - 160 million head of livestock
 - 9.47 billion poultry carcasses
- Conducts 6.9 million food safety & food defense procedures
- Condemns each year:
 - Over 451.7 million pounds of poultry
 - More than 225,396 head of livestock during postmortem (post-slaughter) inspection
- In FY 2018, performed 177,126 Humane Handling (HH) verification procedures



This map represents the geographic distribution of FSIS operated/regulated establishments

FSIS spends approximately 80 percent of its funds on personnel salary and benefits. This is predominantly for inspection personnel in establishments and other frontline employees such as investigators and laboratory technicians. In addition to this, FSIS spends about 15 percent of its budget on travel for inspectors and investigators, state inspection programs, system infrastructure, and other fixed costs like employee workers compensation payments. The remaining five percent funds operations including supplies for the workforce (such as aprons, goggles, hardhats, and knives), laboratory supplies, management, policy, shipment of meat/poultry samples for testing, recruitment, financial management, labor relations, and purchase of replacement/new equipment. Additionally, FSIS must adjust to new or anticipated changes in the workforce, industry, law, technology, and the public, plus the introduction or spread of new diseases/pathogens.

Federal Food Safety and Inspection Program

FSIS' Federal Food Safety and Inspection Program funding supports the Agency mission and expenses associated with operations at all Federally inspected meat, poultry and egg product establishments, the ten district offices and three labs. Federal Food Safety and Inspection funding supports frontline inspectors, investigators and testing activities for meat, poultry, and egg products. It supports FSIS mission and all agency strategic goals. Additionally, funds support outreach, education and training, programs designed to ensure public health and food safety through both inspection and enforcement. The Federal Food Safety program conducts public programs to inform, educate and work with a variety of different audiences. Through these activities the Federal Food Safety program supports partnerships, humane handling, emergency coordination and recall activities as well as food defense vulnerability assessments. It provides scientific and public health leadership necessary to support the science-based food safety programs and policies implemented to reduce foodborne illnesses and death.

Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure System (PHDCIS)

FSIS' Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure System (PHDCIS) program funding supports expenses associated with providing public health communications and information systems infrastructure and connectivity. PHDCIS supports FSIS' mission by supporting an innovative enterprise architecture and telecommunications infrastructure to support regulatory decision making that support food safety, public health, and food security for a highly mobile workforce. Funds support transitioning of remote locations to upgraded telecommunications to enable monitoring of remote employee's IT equipment. Funds also support security enhancements through the implementation of tools which help to combat threats from domestic and foreign entities.

International Food Safety and Inspection Program

FSIS' International Food Safety and Inspection Program funding supports expenses associated with import and export operations for meat, poultry, and egg products. International Food Inspection funding develops and makes recommendations concerning international policy. Funds support foreign outreach, customs and border protection coordination activities, international equivalency determinations, export audits, applications and certifications, and foreign food defense outreach. Funds support international coordination and liaisons with foreign governments for health and agriculture on international regulatory requests for access to the U.S. market for meat, poultry and processed egg products. Funds also support sanctions and authorities; and verification that meat, poultry and egg products imported into the U.S. are produced under equivalent standards and for verifying that foreign countries previously approved to export meat, poultry and egg products are maintaining inspection programs that provide food safety protection at a level equivalent to that in the U.S. and re-inspects all meats, poultry, and egg products offered for import to the U.S. by eligible foreign countries at ports of entry.

State Food Safety and Inspection Program

FSIS' State Food Safety and Inspection Program funding supports expenses associated under State Inspection Program operations and Talmadge Aiken (TA) establishments. State inspected establishments and state-run programs are primarily "small" and "very small" establishments where 1) State employees perform functions "equal to" Federal inspections for FSIS and 2) sales are in-state only. Cooperative Interstate Shipment programs are state run programs that operate "same as" Federal inspections and can ship out of state. The State Inspection Program performs onsite and record reviews of State programs. TA establishments are Federal establishments inspected by state personnel for FSIS following Federal standards. FSIS then reimburses the States. States can use certain FSIS systems which provide state users the ability to access key functional areas which maintains increased communication and information sharing and provides opportunities for allowing them to become more efficient and responsive. This results in an enhanced execution of mission critical public health functions across FSIS and State programs.

A net decrease of \$11,524,000 and a decrease of 76 staff years for FSIS Inspection program (\$1,056,844 and 9,224 staff years is available in 2019).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

1. A decrease of \$16,524,000 and 76 staff years to Federal funding for FSIS Federal Food Safety and Inspection program costs (\$943,824,268 and 9,084 staff years available in 2019).
 - a. A decrease of \$9,024,000 and 76 staff years.
 FSIS proposes to decrease its operating expenses in FY 2020 by \$9,024,000 and 76 SYs. FSIS continually searches for ways to improve our processes through ongoing management reforms and modernization efforts. These reductions will allow FSIS to continue to meet our requirements under the Meat Products Inspection Act, Poultry Products Inspection Act, and Egg Products Inspection Act.
 FSIS proposes to decrease staff in four areas:
 - Office of Investigations, Enforcement, and Audit (OIEA) – FSIS will use a risk-based approach to focus investigations and in-commerce checks on those locations with highest risk
 - Office of Public Health Science (OPHS) – FSI will use a risk-based approach to streamline our sampling projects and reduce sample collections on less risky products
 - Office of Policy Development and Program Development (OPPD) – FSIS will prioritize label submissions and modernization initiatives to focus on those with the biggest potential impact
 - Office of Planning, Analysis and Risk Management (OPARM) – FSIS will increase automation and self-serve options for data requests and focus data analysis on projects with the greatest need
 These efforts will allow FSIS to maintain food safety oversight and reduce operating expenses.
 - b. A decrease of \$7,500,000 for Public Health Veterinarian (PHV) Recruitment and Retention.
 FSIS proposes a reduction of \$7,500,000 in FY 2020 funding to remove the one-time Congressional increase provided to improve the recruitment and retention of PHVs. FSIS established a recruitment incentive, a scholarship program, and a student loan repayment program for PHVs to reduce the vacancy rate.
2. An increase of \$5,000,000 to State funding for reimbursements to State Inspection program costs (\$61,681,834 and 20 staff years available in 2019).

The FMIA and the PPIA provide for FSIS to cooperate with State agencies in developing and administering State MPI programs. The Federal State Cooperative Act (Talmadge-Aiken) (7 U.S.C. 450) further authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into cooperative arrangements with State departments of agriculture and other State agencies to assist the Secretary in the administration and enforcement of relevant Federal laws and regulations to the extent and in the manner appropriate to the public interest. Since State establishments are primarily “small” and “very small” establishments, FSIS recognizes that at times there are advantages (i.e., it either saves the Agency money or meets a difficult-to-meet Federal inspection or regulatory need) to using State inspection personnel in the performance of both mandatory and voluntary meat, poultry, and egg products inspections at official Federal establishments. State inspectors working in establishments under Federal inspection are performing their inspection duties on behalf of FSIS and apply the Federal seal of inspection. The statutes provide for FSIS to contribute up to 50 percent of the cost of the State Cooperative Inspection Programs and other support, and up to 100 percent of TA costs.

Currently FSIS reimbursement is approximately 48 percent of state expenses. Part of the reason States are reimbursed less than 50 percent is because their costs, such as salaries, have increased over time, but the State Program Project Activity (PPA) has not had commensurate increases. Recently, multiple States have complained about the low reimbursement rate. If the States decide to drop their program, then FSIS is required by law to provide the inspectors for those establishments. State inspection programs provide coverage that is often more efficient than what FSIS could provide to small and very small establishments. Because of the size and disbursement of the plants, the actual FSIS cost to perform these inspections might be 20 percent higher or more than the costs the States incur. If all the States drop their inspection programs, FSIS cost could go up a total of \$60-70 million.

Funding will be used primarily to increase reimbursement to States that engage in Federal-State Cooperative Agreements. This request would restore reimbursement to around 50 percent of State costs, cover some TA costs,

and show the States that we support them for this very important mission. This increase in reimbursement is both proper because the law authorizes it, in some cases the States are performing work for FSIS, and it could prove cost effective if it keeps the States in the TA program vs giving it back to FSIS with a \$60-70 million bill.

Table FSIS-11. KPI 1-Percentage of Establishments that Meet Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards

KPI	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2018 Target	2018 Result	2019 Target	2020 Target
Percent of Establishments that meet Performance Standards	77	71	68	Met	72	73
Percent of Establishments whose non- compliance rate decreases 120 days after receiving Early Warning Alert (EWA) ..	73	73	71	Met	73	74

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Food Safety and Inspection Service

User Fee Overtime Status

Current legislative authority to be amended:

In FY 2020, FSIS proposes a change to the current Overtime/Holiday policy to require establishments and official plants to pay fees to cover the costs of Overtime/Holiday services whenever the establishment is outside of its approved operating schedule and is considered in an Overtime/Holiday status for Federal, State, and international inspection programs for meat, poultry, and egg products. This change will ease scheduling and allow restructuring of jobs while still charging the establishment for the cost of providing inspections and related activities when in Overtime/Holiday status.

FSIS’ current policy states that for overtime to be charged for mandatory inspection, the plant must be operating outside of the approved hours of operation and the inspector must also be in overtime status. For example, if the plant is outside the approved hours of operation, but the inspector, for whatever reason, is not in an overtime status, the plant will not be charged. An inspector is required by law to be at the plant as long as it is operating. With this change, FSIS will charge when establishments are outside of their normal hours of operations because they are still receiving the benefit of extra hours. This will allow for ease of scheduling and possible restructuring of jobs. This change will be cost neutral for industry because FSIS does not currently have FSIS personnel who are not in overtime status when the plant itself is in an overtime status. Therefore, FSIS won’t bill extra hours to industry, but will be able to change internal operations so that FSIS could assign workers, regardless of their status, to cover inspection outside of establishments’ normal hours of operations.

There will be no offsets in Fiscal Year 2020.

User Fee

Current legislative authority to be amended:

In FY 2020, FSIS proposes to require establishments and official plants to pay user fees to cover the costs of the Federal, State, and International domestic inspection programs for meat, poultry, and egg products for an estimated total of \$660 million. These fees will start being collected in FY 2020 and then used to reduce appropriation needs in future years.

Industry receives a benefit from USDA inspections of meat, poultry and egg products. A user fee would cover the costs incurred for inspections and related activities. The fee would not cover Federal functions such as investigations, enforcement, risk analysis, and emergency response. This fee would increase the cost of meat, poultry, and egg products for consumers by less than one cent per pound. The measure would allow the Secretary to adjust the terms, conditions, and rates of the fees in order to minimize economic impacts on small or very small establishments and plants.

There will be no offsets in Fiscal Year 2020.

Table FSIS-12. Fees to Cover Costs of Inspections and Other Related Activities (thousands of dollars)

Item	2020	2021	2022	10 Year Total
Budget Authority	0	\$660,000	\$660,000	\$5,940,000
Outlays	0	0	\$660,000	\$5,280,000

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND STAFF YEARS*Table FSIS-13. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years (thousands of dollars, staff years (SY))*

State/Territory/Country	2017 Actual	SY	2018 Actual	SY	2019 Estimate	SY	2020 Budget	SY
Alabama.....	\$36,262	408	\$35,440	380	\$35,440	408	\$35,054	405
Alaska.....	893	7	809	7	809	7	800	7
American Samoa.....	51	-	69	-	69	-	69	-
Arizona.....	3,678	33	3,694	32	3,694	33	3,653	33
Arkansas.....	44,198	477	42,708	444	43,408	477	42,242	473
California.....	64,116	571	64,173	556	64,673	571	63,473	566
Colorado.....	27,140	221	26,754	213	26,954	221	26,462	219
Connecticut.....	1,745	16	1,714	16	1,714	16	1,695	16
Delaware.....	12,674	141	12,727	149	12,727	149	12,588	148
District of Columbia.....	125,535	665	138,487	559	139,413	665	135,519	660
Florida.....	10,039	111	10,475	107	10,675	111	10,361	110
Georgia.....	80,279	685	80,909	673	81,609	685	80,027	679
Guam.....	227	2	277	3	277	3	274	3
Hawaii.....	2,353	20	2,337	18	2,387	20	2,312	20
Idaho.....	3,294	28	4,172	37	4,172	37	4,127	37
Illinois.....	32,207	229	32,880	221	33,380	229	32,522	227
Indiana.....	14,955	149	14,593	136	15,293	146	14,434	145
Iowa.....	42,196	416	43,409	403	43,909	416	42,936	413
Kansas.....	19,894	231	19,709	212	20,209	231	19,494	229
Kentucky.....	16,356	190	15,838	177	16,438	190	15,666	188
Louisiana.....	10,423	94	10,791	91	10,791	91	10,673	90
Maine.....	1,551	13	1,738	13	1,738	13	1,719	13
Maryland.....	30,077	160	32,571	159	32,571	159	32,216	158
Massachusetts.....	2,519	26	2,700	26	2,700	26	2,670	26
Michigan.....	9,786	103	10,052	100	10,052	100	9,943	99
Minnesota.....	29,329	275	29,728	277	29,728	277	29,404	275
Mississippi.....	35,320	349	34,670	341	34,699	349	34,292	346
Missouri.....	36,230	341	35,458	336	35,478	341	35,071	338
Montana.....	3,031	21	2,957	19	2,957	19	2,924	19
N. Mariana Islands.....	71	1	133	1	133	1	132	1
Nebraska.....	28,888	302	28,422	282	28,422	282	28,112	279
Nevada.....	621	6	804	8	804	8	795	8
New Hampshire.....	1,033	11	943	10	943	10	933	10
New Jersey.....	10,671	109	10,831	107	10,831	107	10,713	106
New Mexico.....	1,379	14	1,566	15	1,566	15	1,549	15
New York.....	15,370	162	15,140	156	15,140	156	14,975	155
North Carolina.....	46,937	456	47,794	449	47,794	449	47,273	445
North Dakota.....	1,929	13	1,881	12	1,881	12	1,861	12
Ohio.....	17,248	131	18,275	135	18,275	135	18,076	134
Oklahoma.....	9,261	88	9,604	90	9,604	90	9,500	89
Oregon.....	5,094	50	5,350	50	5,350	50	5,292	50
Pennsylvania.....	36,142	337	36,746	332	36,746	332	36,345	329
Puerto Rico.....	4,060	42	3,971	40	3,971	40	3,928	40
Rhode Island.....	911	10	898	9	898	9	888	9

State/Territory/Country	2017 Actual	SY	2018 Actual	SY	2019 Estimate	SY	2020 Budget	SY
South Carolina	13,017	123	13,159	118	13,179	123	13,016	122
South Dakota.....	5,912	56	5,664	53	5,664	56	5,602	56
Tennessee.....	17,466	196	17,696	200	17,696	200	17,503	198
Texas.....	67,341	620	66,865	603	66,885	620	66,136	615
Utah	6,188	49	6,215	45	6,215	45	6,147	45
Vermont	2,206	10	2,443	10	2,443	10	2,416	10
Virgin Islands.....	130	1	118	1	118	1	117	1
Virginia.....	18,325	184	18,462	181	18,462	184	18,260	182
Washington	10,217	106	9,588	98	9,608	106	9,483	105
West Virginia.....	4,267	36	4,005	33	4,005	35	3,961	35
Wisconsin	18,095	148	19,192	152	19,192	152	18,982	151
Wyoming	426	-	712	2	712	2	704	2
Obligations.....	1,039,563	9,243	1,058,319	8,902	1,064,503	9,224	1,045,320	9,148
Lapsing Balances	273	-	158	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, EOY	7,830	-	7,659	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	1,047,666	9,243	1,066,136	8,902	1,064,503	9,224	1,045,320	9,148

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS**Table FSIS-14 Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)**

Item No.	Item	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Estimate	2020 Budget
	Personnel Compensation:				
	Washington D.C.	\$80,734	\$79,465	\$79,465	\$78,780
	Personnel Compensation, Field	511,842	513,429	513,429	508,997
11	Total personnel compensation	592,576	592,894	592,894	587,777
12	Personal benefits	224,803	245,178	250,446	234,100
13.0	Benefits for former personnel	781	840	840	840
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits	818,160	838,912	844,180	822,717
	Other Objects:				
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons.....	39,239	35,565	35,565	34,800
22.0	Transportation of things.....	2,907	4,649	4,649	4,649
23.1	Rental payments to GSA.....	9,912	10,795	10,765	10,755
23.2	Rental payments to others.....	3	-	-	-
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	10,505	14,638	14,638	14,638
24.0	Printing and reproduction	703	806	806	806
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	2,887	2,839	2,839	2,839
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources.....	39,681	35,800	36,716	35,030
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources...	43,165	38,901	38,931	38,941
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities.....	505	676	676	676
25.7	Operation and maintenance of equipment.....	1,437	1,575	1,575	1,575
26.0	Supplies and materials	11,440	12,495	12,495	12,226
31.0	Equipment.....	7,111	5,768	5,768	5,768
41.0	Grants, subsidies, and contributions	50,994	54,490	54,490	59,490
42.0	Insurance claims and indemnities	766	408	408	408
43.0	Interest and dividends.....	152	2	2	2
44.0	Refunds.....	-4	-	-	-
	Total, Other Objects	221,403	219,407	220,323	222,603
99.9	Total, new obligations.....	1,039,563	1,058,319	1,064,503	1,045,320
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3).....	\$1,495	\$1,696	\$1,726	\$1,736
	Position Data:.....				
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position.....	\$176,792	\$182,825	\$182,825	\$182,825
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position	\$63,307	\$66,394	\$66,093	\$66,196
	Average Grade, GS Position.....	8.1	9.8	9.8	9.8

STATUS OF PROGRAMS

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health regulatory Agency within USDA responsible for ensuring that domestic and imported meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, secure, wholesome, and accurately labeled, as required by the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA), and the Egg Products Inspection Act (EPIA). FSIS also enforces the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA), which requires that all livestock at Federally inspected establishments be handled and slaughtered humanely. To carry out these Congressional mandates, FSIS employs 9,010 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) (8,984 employees). Among these employees are a frontline workforce of 7,834 permanent FTEs (7,669 employees) and 134 other-than-permanent FTEs (211 employees) that work in over 6,462 Federally regulated establishments, (includes 147 import establishments), three FSIS laboratories and nearly 160,000 in-commerce facilities nationwide. In addition, there are 1,042 FTEs (1,104 employees) who support them.

FSIS provides in-plant inspection of all domestic processing and slaughter establishments preparing meat, poultry, and processed egg products for sale or distribution into commerce, as well as surveillance and investigation of all meat, poultry and egg product facilities. FSIS inspection program personnel are present for all domestic slaughter operations, inspect each livestock and poultry carcass, and inspect each processing establishment at least once per shift. In addition to in-plant personnel in Federally inspected establishments, FSIS employs several other field personnel, such as laboratory technicians and investigators. Program investigators conduct surveillance, investigations, and other activities at food warehouses, distribution centers, retail stores, and other businesses operating in commerce that store, handle, distribute, transport, or sell meat, poultry, or processed egg products to the consuming public. FSIS ensures the safety of imported products through a three-part equivalence process, which includes analysis of an applicant country's legal and regulatory structure, initial and periodic onsite equivalence auditing of the country's food regulatory systems, and continual point-of-entry re-inspection of products received from the exporting country. FSIS also has cooperative agreements with 27 States that operate intrastate meat and poultry inspection programs. FSIS conducts reviews of these State programs to ensure that they are "at least equal to" the Federal program. Additionally, FSIS has a second program with five States that have inspection programs that are the same as the Federal program. Under this program, State-inspected establishments in the program can ship products in interstate commerce.

Strategic Plan: FSIS utilized the goals included in the FY 2017-2021 strategic plan to evaluate current and future activities, and innovation for achieving targeted outcomes.

- Goal 1: Prevent Foodborne Illness and Protect Public Health
 - Outcome 1.1. Prevent Contamination
 - Outcome 1.2. Limit Illness from Regulated Products
- Goal 2: Modernize Inspection Systems, Policies, and the Use of Scientific Approaches
 - Outcome 2.1. Improve Food Safety and Humane Handling Practices Through Adoption of Innovative Approaches
 - Outcome 2.2. Enhance Access to Complete and Accurate Information to Inform Decisions
- Goal 3: Achieve Operational Excellence
 - Outcome 3.1. Maintain a Well-Trained and Engaged Workforce
 - Outcome 3.2. Improved Processes and Services

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Frontline Inspection

During FY 2018, FSIS inspection program personnel ensured public health requirements were met in establishments that slaughter or process 160 million heads of livestock and 9.47 billion poultry carcasses (up 5 million head and 29 million carcasses from FY 2017). This is the fourth year in a row with increased production. Inspection program personnel also conducted 6.9 million food safety and food defense procedures to verify that systems at all Federally inspected facilities continued to maintain food safety and wholesomeness requirements. During FY 2018, inspection program personnel condemned more than 451.7 million pounds of poultry and more than 225,396 heads of livestock during post-mortem (post slaughter) inspection.

Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection

FSIS successfully achieved a 100 percent conversion rate of establishments opting-in and ready to implement the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS) in FY 2018. Since its inception, 62 non-HIMP establishments have joined the 25 pilot HIMP establishments that have implemented NPIS. These 87 establishments represent about 26 percent of the poultry slaughter volume domestically with the remaining 74 percent from establishments using non-NPIS inspection systems. Of these 87 establishments, 71 produce chicken, 15 turkey, and one multispecies.

Public Health Veterinarians (PHV) Recruitment and Retention Incentives

In FY 2018, Congress appropriated \$7.5 million in no-year funding specifically targeted to increase the recruitment and retention of PHVs to reduce the vacancy rate. FSIS established a recruitment incentive, a scholarship program, and a student loan repayment program for PHVs.

Public Health Veterinarians (PHV) Training Modernization

FY 2018, FSIS deployed a modernized PHV classroom course, including innovative solutions, such as providing the opportunity to view the inspector's work setting in an engaging, highly-sensory manner using cutting-edge 360-degree Virtual Reality technology and media-rich, interactive classroom training environments.

Online Help for Employees

FSIS continued to enhance the Inspection Program Personnel and Supervisor Help buttons - online training and help sites especially for FSIS employees. These sites provide performance-related information, training reinforcement, instructional resources, simulations, tutorials, Q&A's, videos, and how-to guides at employees' fingertips to support their work on an as-needed basis. In FY 2018, the Help buttons content was increased threefold and averaged more than 45,000 hits per month. (Goal 3)

Electronic Export Application and Certification

FSIS implemented the Public Health Information System (PHIS) Export application and certification component on June 29, 2018. This phased rollout allows US exporters to electronically apply for and receive export certification for the initial 16 countries.

Salmonella

A PHIS alert system was instituted to signal to establishments when they are approaching Category 3 status. FSIS also resumed posting individual establishment names for poultry carcass pathogen reduction standards after a hiatus was needed to analyze the effect of the use of FSIS's new neutralizing Buffered Peptone Water on the Salmonella performance standards and to assess the implementation of follow-up sampling.

Sampling

In May 2018, FSIS approved reallocating import residue samples for FY 2019 to focus on testing raw product over processed product. This approach will maximize the information FSIS obtains from residue testing of imported products by putting additional focus on raw products where more analytes can be detected. FSIS will continue to conduct residue testing of processed products as part of re-inspection activities for countries that are not expected to export raw products to the US or are only eligible to ship processed product.

Foodborne illness Outbreak Investigation

FSIS coordinated investigations for nine foodborne illness clusters. Of the ten investigations, three were investigations for *E. coli*, one was for *Listeria monocytogenes (Lm)*, and six were for *Salmonella*. (Goal 1)

Outreach to Industry

FSIS has made an effort to increase outreach to industry and other stakeholders. FSIS reorganized how outreach is provided to include getting Enforcement Investigations and Analysis Officers (EAIOS) across the country to focus more on outreach to small plants. Also, during FY 2018, FSIS measured the effectiveness of its outreach by surveying stakeholders and partners on value, efficiency, quality of delivery, and if expectations were met.

Federal Food Safety & Inspection Program***Current Activities******Frontline Inspection***

During FY 2018, FSIS inspection program personnel ensured public health requirements were met in establishments that slaughter or process 160 million heads of livestock and 9.47 billion poultry carcasses (plus 5 million head and 29 million carcasses from FY 2017). This is the fourth year in a row with increased production. Inspection program personnel also conducted 6.9 million food safety and food defense procedures to verify that systems at all Federally inspected facilities continued to maintain food safety and wholesomeness requirements. During FY 2018, inspection program personnel condemned more than 451.7 million pounds of poultry and more than 225,396 heads of livestock during post-mortem (post slaughter) inspection.

Public Health Veterinarians (PHVs) Initiatives

PHVs are a vital part of the FSIS food safety system and FSIS has initiated several steps to improve recruitment and retention of PHVs to reduce their vacancy rate. First, major outreach activities were held to promote FSIS veterinary

positions to both veterinary students and practitioners and streamlined hiring events were conducted to support hiring for mission critical occupations. The open continuous announcement used to direct hire veterinarians has been updated to provide more detail regarding the specifics of the available positions and canvassing is sent monthly to all applicants on the direct hire list announcing new vacancy locations. A reassignment list has been established for veterinarians to easily move between locations of interest, bolstering job satisfaction, decreasing vacancy timeframes, and improving job fill rates. (Goal 3)

In FY 2018, Congress appropriated \$7.5 million in no-year funding specifically targeted to increase recruitment and retention of PHVs to reduce the vacancy rate. FSIS established a recruitment incentive, a scholarship program and a student loan repayment program for PHVs. After funds were received in March 2018, FSIS set up the programs and pay incentives to 15 new hires, contract for another 13 PHVs with start dates in FY 2019 and establish nine Malak scholarships with a requirement to join FSIS after graduation (total obligations \$758K). The Student loan repayment will begin in FY 2019.

Additionally, in FY 2018 FSIS modernized PHV training to make it more interactive and realistic so that PHVs are better prepared for their assignments and more likely to fit into their new jobs

Salmonella

FSIS continued its multipronged approach to combat *Salmonella* and assessing whether establishments met the FY 2016 *Salmonella and Campylobacter* pathogen standards. FSIS published two Notices to direct follow-up sampling and actions to be taken following an establishment not meeting a *Salmonella* performance standard. As part of this, a PHIS alert system was instituted to signal to establishments when they are approaching Category 3 status. FSIS also resumed posting individual establishment names for poultry carcass pathogen reduction standards after a hiatus was needed to initiate follow-up sampling. To assist stakeholders in understanding how establishments are categorized based on *Salmonella* performance standards, FSIS held two outreach webinars. FSIS also continued to publish monthly aggregate category status for carcasses, chicken parts, and comminuted poultry. FSIS has committed to start posting individual establishment category information for parts and comminuted poultry in November 2018.

In FY 2018, FSIS completed a yearlong study to estimate the prevalence of *Salmonella* in pork products. The study was used to develop performance standard options for *Salmonella* in ground pork. FSIS will continue to analyze the study data to determine if performance standard options can be developed for intact pork products. For beef products, FSIS completed a draft of a Federal Register Notice to seek public comment on proposed *Salmonella* performance standards in ground beef and beef manufacturing trimmings. FSIS plans to publish this notice in FY 2019.

FSIS continues evaluating data to inform sampling plan development for product that has historically been excluded from *Salmonella* verification testing. In May 2018, FSIS completed a baseline study for shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) and *Salmonella* in pork samples collected from slaughter establishments, and the results will be used to develop prevalence estimates and industry guidance. FSIS will also determine whether new or updated performance standards are necessary for pork products.

Campylobacter Testing

In FY 2018, FSIS determined that *Campylobacter* performance standards could be more effective if FSIS moved to a more sensitive testing method. This method would detect more *Campylobacter* and allow FSIS more accurate prevalence estimates. In a Constituent Update, FSIS announced that it would be switching all performance standards related *Campylobacter* testing over to the more sensitive method. FSIS will use the more accurate data to update the current *Campylobacter* performance standards. FSIS also published guidelines on *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* contamination of chicken livers. Chicken liver is the FSIS-regulated commodity most attributed to *Campylobacter* illnesses.

Chemical residue

In FY 2018 FSIS updated and implemented several changes to the National Residue Program (NRP). The number of samples analyzed for hormones and pesticides were increased for several slaughter classes. A new slaughter class, feral swine, was included in the NRP. During FY 2018 FSIS validated the pesticide multi-residue method for egg products and anticipate the sampling of egg products in in FY 2019.

FSIS collaborated with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Environmental Protection Agency, and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on issues related to chemicals, residues, and pesticides. There continues to be a downward trend in the numbers of residue violations detected through Agency testing over the previous three years (FY2015–792, FY2016-758, and FY2017-703).

FSIS Laboratories validated a new methodology for analyzing liquid and dried egg products for pesticides.

Sampling Plans

FSIS continues to play a key role in refining existing and developing new sampling programs by overseeing the implementation and maintenance of several microbiological, chemical residue, and other sampling programs in accordance with policy and Agency objectives to implement more targeted sampling approaches. In FY 2018, FSIS developed and implemented or updated several sampling programs.

- In May 2018, FSIS began collecting product samples for label verification testing.
 - FSIS is conducting this exploratory sampling program to verify industry's compliance with the Agency's labeling regulations.
- In June 2018, FSIS started gathering information on dioxin levels in U.S. beef, pork, and poultry. Dioxins are a group of compounds of public health concern.
 - These compounds are ubiquitous, but generally occur at very low levels throughout the environment as persistent environmental contaminants.

Since October 1, 2017, FSIS has analyzed 106,540 samples and generated 2,257,336 individual test results on these samples. Additionally, FSIS conducted microbiological characterization of 15,933 bacterial isolates reporting 485,146 separate test results.

Additional sampling accomplishments in FY 2018 included:

- Implemented pesticide testing on imported egg products;
- Initiated the Dioxin survey program which occurs every five years;
- Completed of the residue testing paired with the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS) sampling program;
- Initiated new label verification programs for soy, antibiotics and hormones;
- Updated the import beef sampling program to include testing for Non-O157 STEC;
- Updated the acceptance criteria for lab discarded samples to reduce the number of samples discarded due to over temperature but can still yield accurate results;
- Formalized a process to request discarding results to improve customer service and informational awareness;
- Updated the beef product group categorizations which led to better sampling task completion;
- Initiated quarterly reporting to evaluate sampling program performance and direct efforts to re-align the programs with established yearly goals.
 - The evaluation disclosed that one series of programs, Routine Listeria Monitoring (*RLm*), were severely off target.
 - Investigation identified an error within the FY 2018 sampling plan for these projects.
 - FSIS created an implementation plan to correct the course of these projects.

Lab Methodology Updates

During FY 2018, FSIS completed extensive work revising and validating the Microbiology Laboratory Guidebooks (MLG) and the Chemistry Laboratory Guidebook methods (CLG). The laboratories improved two MLG chapters: a revised method for staph enterotoxin (SET) analysis, and updated instructions to prepare microbiological media and reagents. For chemistry, the pesticides screening method was expanded to include egg products; the ceftiofur method was expanded to include bovine muscle and porcine kidney and muscle; the trace metals method was updated to include arsenic, allowing the retirement of the older standalone arsenic method; and three other chemistry methods now contain improved QC criteria. All method updates can be found on the CLG and MLG websites.

Whole Genome Sequencing Expansion (WGS): FSIS hosted a public meeting on WGS in October 2017 in collaboration with FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), and other stakeholders; FSIS continued to subject all FSIS regulatory and NARMS pathogenic isolates to WGS in real-time. In FY 2018, FSIS performed WGS on over 12,000 bacterial isolates compared to around 7,200 in FY 2017. FSIS continued to use WGS analysis for investigating outbreaks as well as *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) harborage. As of January 15, 2018, all *Lm* characterization is generated using Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) only. FSIS incorporated the WGS reporting in the Establishment Quarterly Letters on September 25, 2018 and notified inspection program personnel (Notice 48-18) of the change.

Training

The FSIS workforce is a cornerstone of public health protection. The workforce training strategy used by FSIS includes providing entry-level training on mission-critical inspection skills to new employees, followed by additional training as policy is updated and for training to reinforce knowledge about how to perform complex public health protection duties.

During FY 2018, FSIS provided entry level training to 294 new Food Inspectors, and 523 newly promoted Consumer Safety Inspectors. FSIS also provided training to 66 Public Health Veterinarians, 25 Enforcement Investigations and Analysis Officers (EIAO), 44 Egg Inspectors, and 78 Thermal Processing Inspectors. FSIS offered Ready-to-Eat/Shelf Stable training to 25 employees, PHV Mentors training to six new hires, PHIS Egg Products training to five employees, Imports training to 46 employees, Import Sanitation Inspection training to one employee, Investigative Interviewing Techniques course to 24 Compliance Investigators and PHIS Electronic Export Webinar Training to 1,388 employees. In FY 2018, FSIS developed and provided a new Processing and Labeling Inspection class for 85 employees. In FY 2018, FSIS also deployed a modernized PHV classroom course, including innovative solutions such as providing the opportunity to view the inspector's work setting in an engaging, highly-sensory manner using cutting-edge 360-degree Virtual Reality technology and media-rich, interactive classroom training environments. (Goal 3)

During FY 2018, FSIS continued to track knowledge-gained by students in mission critical occupations training programs. FSIS achieved an increase of 1.9 percent in FY 2018 resulting in an overall 80.8 percent knowledge gain score for training in key occupations (results based on post training test scores and supervisor knowledge gained survey results). This result exceeded the strategic plan goal of 1.5 percent per year and is within 0.1 percent of the FY 2018 stretch goal of two percent. (Goal 3)

FSIS also achieved the FY 2018 annual plan goal to assess 25 percent of the workforce skills gaps. In FY 2018, FSIS completed the development of a FSIS specific competency model for Food Inspectors and completed gap assessments for Consumer Safety Inspectors (CSI) and PHVs. (Goal 3)

FSIS continued to enhance the Inspection Program Personnel and Supervisor Help buttons - online training and help sites especially for FSIS employees. These sites provide performance-related information, training reinforcement, instructional resources, simulations, tutorials, Q&A's, videos, and how-to guides at employees' fingertips to support their work on an as-needed basis. In FY 2018, the Help buttons content was increased threefold and averaged more than 45,000 hits per month. (Goal 3)

In FY 2018, FSIS fully implemented a new Processing and Labeling Inspection course designed to provide a more detailed review of complex processing operations and non-food safety consumer protection tasks, including formulation, preparation, and labeling verification activities for fresh and cooked sausage operations, cured meat and poultry products, and added solutions in meat and poultry products. It also covers general labeling requirements, calculations, and processing equipment. Eighty-five CSIs, PHVs, and Frontline Supervisors have attended the three training sessions. (Goal 3)

FSIS provided one custom training course tailored to FSIS employees. Eighteen headquarters employees attended an Inspection Short Course which provided a high-level overview of all field inspection activities for non-field staff.

Outreach and Partnerships

In FY 2018, FSIS deployed innovative approaches to develop and deliver outreach that was focused on enhancing the communication of technical scientific and regulatory compliance information. In FY 2018, FSIS exhibited and conducted outreach at 13 industry conferences, conventions, and meetings that cater to small and very small plant establishments and the associations that represent these businesses. FSIS also conducted 18 webinars for establishment owners and operators and other industry partners that highlight relevant agency initiatives and recently published agency policy and regulations. Also, during FY 2018, FSIS measured the effectiveness of its outreach by surveying stakeholders and partners on value, efficiency, quality of delivery, and if expectations, were met. (Goal 1)

Small Plant Outreach

FSIS provides a significant amount of outreach and technical resources to small and very small plants – both Federal and State Inspected. The Small Plant Help Desk, continues to serve small plant owners and operators with valuable technical assistance. In FY 2018, stakeholder inquires totaled 3,061, a decrease from last year's record of 4,557. Additionally, FSIS received 5,404 email and on-line inquiries from small and very small plants through the AskFSIS

system. FSIS reorganized how outreach is provided to include getting EAIOs across the country to focus more on outreach to small plants. (Goal 1)

Humane Handling

FSIS published FSIS Notice 09-18 Requirements for the Dispositions of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Veal Calves in February 2018. This notice reissues the instructions previously provided in FSIS Notice 66-16 for inspection program personnel (IPP) on how to conduct ante-mortem inspection of non-ambulatory disabled cattle, including non-ambulatory disabled veal calves. FSIS published FSIS Notice 34-18 Assessment and Verification Reviews of an Official Livestock Establishment's Robust Systematic Approach (RSA) for Humane Handling and Slaughter in June 2018. This notice reissues the content of FSIS Notice 04-17 in its entirety and provides additional information about the documentation of the findings from the verification review. This notice provides instructions to FSIS PHVs, IPP and District Veterinary Medical Specialists (DVMSs) about assessing and informing official livestock establishments whether their written systematic approach for humane handling and slaughter meets the criteria for being a “robust” program. This notice also outlines the expected frequency for PHV and DVMS verification reviews. Part of the 2018 annual plan included an industry survey targeting small and very small plants to assess their outreach needs for humane handling. The survey was pushed out in the summer and the data analysis results will be used to develop and outreach plan for small and very small plants.

In 2018, approximately 86 percent of all livestock establishments who received a monthly humane handling inspection task had a written program. Of those establishments with a written systematic approach, approximately 87 percent have an RSA. Also, eighty-seven percent of slaughter establishments were compliant with restraint and stunning requirements.

In addition, FSIS had a humane handling goal as part of its FY 2018 Annual Plan: Deliver refresher training to 40 percent of IPP in livestock slaughter establishments by September 30, 2017. The FY 2018 total for course completion was for 2,510. Well beyond the target of 1000. In FY 2018, the Agency devoted 204.2 FTEs to the verification and enforcement of humane handling requirements in Federally inspected establishments, spending more than 424,697 hours completing these tasks. In total, FSIS personnel performed 149,702 verification procedures.

Siluriformes Fish and Fish Products Inspection Domestic

At the end of FY 2018, there were 95 establishments that were actively preparing or processing *Siluriformes* throughout the US.

In FY 2018, FSIS collected 1,249 samples of *Siluriformes* fish/fish products at domestic slaughter establishments and performed analytical tests to detect *Salmonella* and a variety of chemical residues and performed speciation of the fish using a DNA barcoding technique. In March 2018, FSIS announced the recall of *Siluriformes* fish products from Heartland Catfish Company in Mississippi that may have been adulterated with residues of Malachite Green. In June 2018, FSIS announced the recall of various raw, frozen *Siluriformes* fish, beef, pork and poultry products from Supermercados Selectos in Puerto Rico that were produced without the benefit of Federal inspection.

Prevention, Preparedness, and Response

During FY 2018, the agency responded to historic damage caused by Hurricanes Irma (Virgin Islands and Florida), and Maria (Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico). FSIS monitored damages caused by floodwater, outages of electricity, and structural damage to determine if any Tier 1 in-commerce firms (distributors and warehouses) were impacted. Due to the extensive damage with the power grid in Puerto Rico, FSIS conducted onsite visits or made phone contact with Tier 1 and Tier 2 firms to determine if there was an operational impact and ensured that damaged products were not entering commerce. For Hurricanes Irma and Maria, FSIS investigators assisted with over 192 surveillance activities, helped ensure over 6,331,825 pounds of adulterated meat and poultry products and over 177,685 dozen shell egg products were removed from commerce in Puerto Rico and an additional 223,330 pounds of meat and poultry products were removed from commerce in the U.S. Virgin Islands. (Goal 1)

In addition to the two historic hurricanes, FSIS responded to damage caused by Hurricane Florence in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. FSIS conducted onsite visits or made phone contact with 280 Tier 1 firms to determine operational impact. (Goal 1)

In FY 2018, FSIS developed and conducted six preparedness and response exercises based on Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program principles that addressed a range of mission critical issues and potential threats facing the Agency. Each exercise led to the creation of an After-Action Report/Improvement Plan that identified

critical strengths and areas for improvement, which was monitored to ensure that action items were implemented by participating FSIS program areas.

FSIS annually reviews the FSIS All Hazard Response Plan, Human Pandemic Operations Plan for Employee Health and Safety, Response Plan for Notifiable Avian Influenza and the FSIS Annex to the USDA Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) and updates them to incorporate new and evolving information on hazard characterization, management and control, and new technologies and systems. These plans serve as FSIS' foundation for preparation, response and recovery from significant incidents and are tested throughout the year in multiple exercises that FSIS develops and conducts.

The following exercises were conducted in FY 2018:

- FSIS/APHIS Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza exercise (February 2018)
- FSIS In-House exercise (May 2018)
- FSIS In-House Exercise (January 2018)
- FSIS Devolution Exercise (August 2018)
- FSIS Annual COOP exercise (May 2018)
- Eagle Horizon Exercise (May 2018)

Food Defense Plans

Through preparation of guidance documents and tools, outreach and education to industry to facilitate adoption of effective risk mitigation strategies, and collaboration with industry, FSIS continued to promote food defense by monitoring that establishments have adopted food defense practices and by ensuring the agency increasingly integrates food defense principles, concepts, and practices into daily activities.

FSIS also performed numerous other activities to support food defense, including:

- FSIS published a combination of six articles and social media posts promoting food defense.
 - Food Defense Preparedness and Recall Exercise Package (FD-PREP), Cyber Security Awareness Month, National Preparedness Month, and the synergies between food safety and food defense practices.
- FSIS IPP and compliance investigators performed over 37,800 food defense surveillance activities in accordance with FSIS 5420-series directives.
 - To identify potential vulnerabilities in establishments and in-commerce facilities that increase the risk of intentionally adulterated meat, poultry, or processed egg products.
 - To identify trends that inform outreach and education activities for industry, including development of tools, guidance, and resources to promote adoption of food defense practices.
- Participated in multiple outreach and engagement activities with field personnel, industry representatives, State, Local, Tribal and Territorial governments, and interagency partners.
- Conducted outreach to industry to share information pertaining to updated National Terrorism Advisory System bulletins released by the Department of Homeland Security.
 - Updates were sent in November 2017, May 2018, and September 2018.
- Conducted outreach to its Federal partners to raise awareness of food defense concerns.
- Conducted joint projects and provided subject matter expertise for various activities.
 - FDAS leads and participates in multiple (domestic) interagency committees.
 - Through these interactions, FSIS' food defense goals and interests were promoted.
 - Partner agencies included:
 - USDA Office of Homeland Security (OHS)
 - USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
 - USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
 - Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
 - FDA, the Department of Defense (DOD)
 - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
 - Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
 - The White House
- FSIS sent letters to 6,245 regulated establishments to promote food defense tools and resources, including the newly released FD-PREP.
- FSIS received requests from industry to send out over 550 food defense materials.

- FSIS participated in multiple events associated with the Commercial Facilities Food Defense Initiative and National Security Special Events/Special Security Events.
 - These activities involved Super Bowl LII, Major League Baseball All Star game, and development of a surveillance sampling plan and after-action reports.

Food Defense Vulnerability Assessments

FSIS conducts vulnerability assessments (VAs) to better prevent and protect against an intentional attack on its regulated products, as directed by HSPD-9. These VAs help to identify food defense countermeasures and mitigation strategies aimed at preventing or reducing the impact of an intentional attack on the food supply. They also help identify research gaps and strengthen communication and collaboration between government and industry partners. In 2018, FSIS completed the first VA Framework, which is a risk-based approach to determine which VAs need to be conducted and/or updated. The VA Framework uses input from subject-matter experts in industry, academia, and government to determine if there have been changes in policy, risk, threat, and operations to warrant a new or updated VA. The annual VA Framework analysis provides guidance to complete VAs and VA updates in high-risk areas of the food supply to address potential vulnerabilities. Because of the 2018 VA Framework, FSIS performed updates to vulnerability assessments on cybersecurity and domestic transportation.

Food Emergency Response Network (FERN)

Through its cooperative agreements with State food emergency response laboratories, FSIS accomplished the following major activities:

FERN continued the targeted surveillance of USDA regulated commodities (e.g. Ready-to-eat and raw meat and poultry products) at retail via FERN Cooperative Agreement Program (CAP) partner labs. The 19 participating State laboratories reported results for 2,875 microbiology samples, 2,893 chemistry samples, and 415 radiochemistry samples. Together, the FSIS FERN CAP laboratories tested 6,183 samples of FSIS product from retail for food defense targets including *B. anthracis*, staphylococcal enterotoxin, ricin toxin, *Y. pestis*, toxic chemicals and radioisotopes. The CAP laboratories also participated in a capacity and capability exercise during the 3rd quarter demonstrating the ability to screen foods for threat agents and transfer suspect isolates to a CDC Laboratory Response Network laboratory for confirmation.

FERN participated in 13 proficiency and challenge testing events this past year. These events tested FERN partner labs' capability to find different analytes within selected food matrices. There were 269 labs that participated in these thirteen events and analyzed samples (e.g., cooked chicken nuggets, ready-to-eat pork, etc.) for the following analytes: *Listeria monocytogenes*, toxic metals, sulfite, *Salmonella*, staphylococcal enterotoxin, yohimbine, arecoline, thallium, diazinon, carbofuran, mercury, methamphetamine, atropine, morphine, hydrocodone and ricin.

FERN participated in the Georgia Department of Agriculture Rapid Response Team Full Scale Radiological Exercise, one DHS table top exercises and the Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN) Fentanyl Tabletop Exercise. This participation demonstrates the network's ability to maintain proficiency and readiness in the use of the various tools on the ICLN Portal.

FERN received a total of four Food Defense method submissions this year (*C. botulinum* toxin detection by MALDI-TOF, detection of staphylococcal enterotoxin by ELISA, and ricin toxin detection by ELISA, multi-lab validation of staphylococcal enterotoxin detection by ELISA). These four methods were the result of work performed by laboratories participating in the FSIS/FERN Cooperative Agreement program. The *C. botulinum*, SET, and ricin methods have been approved and posted for use by the FERN network. The SET multi-lab results are still undergoing technical review by the Methods Coordination Committee (MCC).

Foodborne Illness Outbreak Investigation

FSIS coordinated investigations for ten foodborne illness clusters representing 913 illnesses, 225 hospitalizations, 16 Hemolytic-Uremic Syndrome cases, and four deaths. Five of the illness clusters led to a recall. Of the ten investigations, three were investigations for *E. coli* (Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (both *E. coli* O157:H7) and one O26), six for *Salmonella*, one for *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*).

Table FSIS-15 Foodborne Illness Investigations for FY 2018

	Investigations	Ill	Hospitalized	Deceased	Resulted in Product Recall
<i>E. Coli</i>	3	264	37	1	2
<i>Salmonella</i>	6	645	184	2	2

<i>Listeria</i>	1	4	4	1	1
TOTAL	10	913	225	4	5

Recalls

FY 2018 saw a decrease from FY 2017 of 23 food recalls, from 134 to 111, (33 beef, 26 poultry, 23 pork, two *Siluriformes* and 27 combination products). A total of 4,130,012 pounds of meat, poultry, processed egg and *Siluriformes* were recalled in FY 2018, a decrease of 18,984,425 pounds from FY 2017 (23,114,437 pounds). Out of the 111 total recalls, 80 were considered Class I (reasonable probability that eating the food will cause health problems or death), 25 were Class II (remote probability of adverse health consequences from eating the food) and six were Class III (use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences). Seven of the recalls were directly related to microbiological contamination caused by the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes*. Nine of the recalls were in response to microbiological contamination caused by the presence of *E. coli O157:H7*. Twenty-seven of the recalls were due to extraneous material contamination, four recalls were due to contamination of product by *Salmonella*, and 28 recalls were due to undeclared allergens in the product (compared to 57 during FY 2017). The remaining thirty-six recalls were in response to undeclared or unapproved substances, drug residues, mislabeling/misbranding, processing deviations, produced without benefit of inspection, or unsanitary conditions. Additionally, FY 2018 saw a decrease from FY 2017 of one public health alert, from nine to eight. Public Health Alerts are typically issued in lieu of a recall in situations where the Recall Committee determines that a specific product may present a risk to human health, but the Committee cannot recommend a recall. (Goal 1)

Consumer Complaint Management System (CCMS)

FSIS uses the CCMS, media reports, CDC PulseNet and SharePoint data and several other data sources to conduct surveillance and investigation into potential foodborne hazards associated with FSIS regulated products. Surveillance is the backbone to initiate investigation and support response. In FY 2018, FSIS evaluated 1,300 consumer complaints and 88 illness clusters potentially linked to FSIS-regulated products. One hundred and twenty-one consumer complaints (nine percent) required additional investigations with the consumer and producing establishments. Forty-three investigations resulted in 36 voluntary, five enforcements, and two product control actions. Consumer complaints reported through CCMS led to one Class I recall in FY 2018 (FSIS Recall 045-2018). Seven complaints reported after product recalls helped to enhance recall effectiveness activities. Evidence obtained in five of 88 monitored illness clusters suggested involvement of FSIS-products and were subsequently investigated; three of these led to recalls.

In-Commerce Activities

FSIS Compliance Investigators (CI) conduct surveillances, product control, investigations, and enforcement activities at warehouses, distributors, retail stores, and other businesses operating in-commerce that store, handle, distribute, transport, and sell meat, poultry, and processed egg products to the consuming public. In FY 2018, FSIS collected 557 retail ground beef samples for testing for *E. coli O157:H7* (99.4 percent of FSIS' target of 560).

Also, in FY 2018, FSIS CI conducted 1,202 investigations in response to alleged violations of the FMIA, PPIA, or EPIA; 97.3 percent of which were based on food safety violations. The investigative findings and evidence are documented and used to support criminal or civil prosecutions or other enforcement. In FY 2018, FSIS detained over 11.7 million pounds of meat, poultry, and egg products in-commerce to prevent possible injury or illness to consumers. Additionally, 22,681 surveillance activities were conducted in FY 2018. FSIS CIs conducted 4,045 shell egg surveillances in FY 2018 with a 99.3 percent compliance rate for ambient refrigeration requirements and labeling for shell eggs packed, distributed, and sold to consumers. (Goal 1)

FSIS CIs also conducted observations at retailers to assess if the retailers were using the recommendations in the "FSIS Best Practices Guideline for Controlling *Listeria Monocytogenes (Lm)* in Retail Delicatessens." FSIS CIs completed 1,483 "Retail Deli Surveys" in FY 2018. Of the retailers "surveyed" during FY 2018, approximately 92 percent were following 33 of the FSIS recommendations in the guidelines for Retail Deli *Lm* controls. (Goals 1, 2)

In FY 2018, FSIS CIs continued verifying grinding logs at retail facilities. FSIS CIs visited 1,735 firms, educated 725 non-compliant firms, issued 12 Notices of Warning (NOW) and 247 Letters of Information to retail firms found in noncompliance of the Grinding Log Final Rule. The compliance rate increased from 47 percent prior to implementation of the Final Rule to 58 percent at the end of FY 2018. A baseline has been established for future compliance monitoring. (Goal 1)

AssuranceNet/In-commerce System (ANet/ICS)

In FY 2018, FSIS prioritized and implemented performance improvements for the ANet/ICS, including: modernizing the system, GIS mapping and analysis capabilities for in-commerce activities and an independent security and user management module. This tool provided fields for improved user roles management and work assignments. (Goals 1, 2 & 3)

Prosecutions and Other Legal Actions: FSIS obtained convictions of responsible officials in two cases involving violations of the FMIA: in one case, the responsible official was convicted of one felony count, sentenced to three years' probation, and a \$75,000 fine; in the second case, the responsible official was convicted of one misdemeanor count and sentenced to one year of probation. Additionally, FSIS issued 1,075 Notices of Warning (NOWs) (89 from headquarters and 986 from field offices) to individuals and firms for violations of FSIS statutes. These actions served to protect the public, sent a strong message that food safety violations will not be tolerated, and deter future violations. (Goal 1)

Administrative Enforcement

In FY 2018, FSIS filed three administrative complaints and issued one notice of ineligibility to refuse and/or withdraw Federal inspection services and/or custom slaughter and/or processing for food safety, sanitation, or other violations of FSIS statutes and regulations. FSIS negotiated three consent orders and one consent agreement, with terms that improved food safety, sanitation, humane handling, and other compliance objectives. FSIS also led an administrative hearing to support the summary withdrawal of inspection services from a Federal establishment based on food safety, sanitation, and other statutory and regulatory violations. (Goal 1)

In FY 2018, FSIS led action to obtain eight administrative stipulation agreements, totaling \$5,805 in administrative civil penalties for violations of shell egg temperature requirements. FSIS also issued 19 NOWs to resolve alleged shell egg violations. (Goal 1)

Civil Enforcement

In FY 2018, FSIS led action to obtain civil injunctions, civil judgments, and enforce civil decrees in seven cases to stop ongoing and/or recurring violations of FSIS laws. FSIS obtained \$79,380 in fines and/or penalties related to civil enforcement cases. (Goal 1)

Misconduct Investigations

FSIS conducted a total of 164 Personnel Misconduct Investigations that were received through the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Whistleblower Hotline, internal requests from FSIS as well as congressional and public entities. FSIS completed 25 computer forensics investigations resulting from direct observation of inappropriate materials and/or detected by vulnerability detection software and OIG hotline allegations.

Litigation and Appeals

In FY 2018, FSIS applied program knowledge and expertise to deliver exceptional accomplishments in employment and labor litigation, exceeded performance measures and obtained significant results benefitting FSIS. The agency also ensured all actions and outcomes preserved management action, protected agency interests, saved costs, and advanced FSIS strategic goals for achieving operational excellence. Specifically, FSIS initiated litigation strategies for over 75 cases received for this period, including 28 new Union Unfair Labor Practices and arbitrations, 21 new Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints, and 26 new Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) appeals. FSIS obtained over 59 dispositions in cases including filing over 15 EEO, MSPB and arbitration dispositive motions, representing FSIS in six hearings and obtaining 19 settlement agreements for EEO, MSPB, and arbitration cases. (Goal 3)

Establishment-Specific Data Release Strategic Plan

FSIS released the final version of the agency's Establishment-Specific Data Release Strategic Plan for sharing data on Federally inspected meat and poultry establishments and FSIS has since posted many different datasets (pathogen test results by sample for each establishment) on Data.gov and on the FSIS webpage. The following are newly published datasets:

- Beef Components (October 2017)
- Beef Follow-up (January 2018)
- Chicken Carcasses (April 2018)
- Turkey Carcasses (July 2018)

These data sets are in addition to the following datasets that FSIS was already publishing: Meat, Poultry, and Egg Inspection Directory, Summary of Recall Cases in Calendar Year, Ready-to-eat Meat and Poultry Sampling Results, Establishment Demographic Data – Supplement, Egg Sampling, Import Refusals, Ground Beef, Beef Trim.

Stakeholder Inquiries

FSIS reviewed and contributed to approximately 35 letters to Congress and other legislators.

FSIS also responded to more than 260 incoming letters overall, of which 87 percent were from consumers, individuals in the regulated community, and students. Responses included information about agency activities, regulations, petitions, compliance, and FSIS jurisdiction. FSIS also:

- Responded to more than 400 media inquiries and pitched more than 100 media outlets that resulted in stories that promoted public health information related to safety of meat, poultry and processed egg products.
- Planned and executed 15 congressional meetings for FSIS leadership, as well as 14 staff level briefings hosted by committee or member offices.
- Responded to approximately 30 congressional inquiries.
- Hosted five FSIS regulated establishment tours for congressional staff and Members of Congress, as well as three public roundtables with congressional offices for FSIS senior leadership on small plant issues.

USDA Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)

FSIS completed the Entity Level Checklist process using the A-123 Compliance Reporting Tool (ACRT) website in FY 2018. FSIS developed the full risk profile for FY 2018 to enable the ERM strategy to move forward. FSIS uses ACRT to track risks and compliance with all A-123 requirements. (Goal 3)

Rules, Regulations, and Notices

On February 1, 2018, FSIS issued the proposed rule on the Modernization of Swine Slaughter Inspection (83 FR 4780). Under this inspection system, plant employees would conduct the sorting and trimming prior to FSIS inspection. Plants operating under the new inspection system would not have a regulated line speed as long as process control is maintained. In addition, all swine establishments would be required to perform microbial sampling at pre-evisceration and post-chill (except for small and very small establishments, which would only perform microbial sampling at post-chill).

On February 14, 2018, FSIS issued the proposed rule on Egg Products Inspection Regulations (83 FR 6314). Under this rule, the 9 CFR 416 Sanitation, 9 CFR 417 Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), and 9 CFR 500 Rule of Practice would apply to egg products plants. This would remove many of the prescriptive regulations that conflict with the 9 CFR 416 and 417 regulations and provide more freedom for innovation. In addition, the proposed rule provides for generic egg product label approval.

On September 28, 2018, FSIS issued a *Federal Register Notice (FRN)* (83 FR 49048) which provides eligibility criteria for young chicken slaughter establishments to operate at higher line speeds. Current regulations limit the line speed at up to 140 birds per minute (bpm). Establishments meeting the criteria outlined in the FRN may request a waiver of that regulation to operate at up to 175 bpm. (Goal 2)

On May 16, 2018, FSIS proposed to eliminate 9 CFR 310.11, cleaning of hog carcasses before incising (83 FR 22604). This regulation is redundant and no longer necessary under HACCP.

On May 31, 2018, FSIS issued the final rule to eliminate Trichinae control regulations in pork and pork products, as these regulations are redundant with the HACCP regulations (83 FR 25302). In this rule, FSIS combined the meat and poultry canning regulations into a new part of the regulations (9 CFR 431). FSIS finalized the Compliance Guideline for the Prevention and Control of Trichinella and Other Parasitic Hazards in Pork Products on May 31, 2018.

On July 31, 2018, FSIS proposed revisions to its regulations to eliminate prescriptive requirements governing the manufacture of uninspected products, such as pet food, in edible product areas of official establishments and to allow official establishments to manufacture such products outside the hours of inspection (83 FR 36797).

On July 31, 2018, FSIS proposed revisions to its regulations to eliminate the unnecessary requirement that livestock carcasses be marked with the official inspection legend at the time of inspection in a slaughter establishment, if the carcasses are to be further processed in the same establishment (83 FR 36794).

FSIS published 104 new and revised notices and directives, concerning both inspection and Agency administration.

FSIS Notices:***Salmonella and Campylobacter***

FSIS resumed posting individual establishment's *Salmonella* performance standard category for poultry carcasses on January 23, 2018. FSIS resumed posting individual establishment's *Salmonella* performance standard category for poultry parts and comminuted on November 23, 2018. Posting individual establishment *Salmonella* performance standard categories provides the public with information concerning how well establishments are controlling *Salmonella* and has led to establishments more effectively addressing the pathogen.

FSIS implemented follow-up sampling and other necessary follow-actions at poultry establishments not meeting the *Salmonella* performance standards for carcasses, parts, or comminuted product. FSIS transitioned from the direct plate methods to the enrichment method for *Campylobacter* analysis in poultry products. The enrichment method provides improved sensitivity over the direct plating, which allows for improved detection rates. FSIS completed Phase II of the Raw Pork Products Exploratory Sampling Study. Based on the results, FSIS will continue sampling raw pork products for *Salmonella* and will send samples to the Agricultural Research Service for STEC analyses.

On July 30, 2018, FSIS issued a Guideline for Minimizing the risk of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* illnesses associated with chicken liver. This guideline will also be referenced in the 2020 FDA Food Code under Annex 2.

E. coli O157:H7 and STEC

FSIS conducted data analysis on Notice 38-17, which made changes to improve the collection of samples for raw ground beef components (other than beef manufacturing trimmings). The analysis indicated the change increased collection rates for this product from 40 percent up to >70 percent. By increasing the percentage of samples that are collected, FSIS can increase its ability to find contaminated product and keep it from reaching the marketplace.

FSIS presented information on STEC adulteration and detection policies to internal and external stakeholders (State MPI programs, field personnel, and several Food Safety Summits). These presentations clarified policies to strengthen compliance with FSIS requirements and to decrease illnesses associated with STEC.

Listeria monocytogenes

In FY 2018, FSIS analyzed data collected during the first two years of the retail deli pilot project to track whether retailers are following the recommendations in the *FSIS Best Practices Guideline for Controlling Listeria monocytogenes (Lm) in Retail Delicatessens*. The data analysis shows that retailers are following more of the recommendations relative to product handling (increased from 85 percent to 90 percent), cleaning and sanitizing (from 80 percent to 83 percent), facility and equipment controls (from 96 percent to 98 percent), and employee practices (from 95 percent to 96 percent). FSIS is tracking whether retailers are following all eight of the most important recommended actions identified in the guidelines and the percent of retailers following the majority of the 33 recommendations. The increased acceptance by retail establishments should decrease the amount of *Lm* contaminated ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry products reaching the consumer and the number of associated *Lm* foodborne illnesses (Goals 1, 2)

Allergens

FSIS, with participation from FDA, CDC, international partners, and academic institutions, hosted a public meeting to discuss the prevention of undeclared allergens in FSIS-regulated product. Specifically, the meeting addressed the continued occurrence of product recalls due to undeclared allergens and best practices for preventing the presence of undeclared allergens in FSIS-regulated products. Topics focused on FSIS policy and enforcement regarding undeclared allergens, labeling compliance, best practices for prevention, and emerging issues. Industry and interested individuals, organizations, and other stakeholders were invited to participate in the meeting and comment on these topics.

FSIS issued *FSIS Directive 7230.1 Ongoing Verification of Product Formulation and Labeling Targeting the Eight Most Common ("Big 8") Food Allergens*. The directive provides instructions to IPP for performing the "Big 8" Formulation Verification Task in PHIS. FSIS revised the directive to emphasize the public health importance of verifying control of "Big 8" allergens in establishments; decrease the length of the questionnaire to make better use of IPP resources; and to respond to questions about cold-pressed oils as allergens.

Food Labeling Compliance

In FY 2018, FSIS evaluated and processed 27,284 label submissions from industry for meat, poultry, and processed egg products. Of these submissions, 23,821 were approved, and 3,463 submissions were not approved and returned to be corrected. FSIS received and responded to more than 12,000 email inquiries from domestic producers and manufacturers, foreign establishments, trade groups, State and foreign government officials, embassies,

Congressional offices, consumers/consumer groups, universities, and research organizations that requested guidance on labeling, food standards, ingredients, and jurisdiction policies. FSIS also responded to over 12,703 ask FSIS incidents and other correspondence to manufacturers explaining labeling, food standards, ingredients, and jurisdiction policies in response to recalls and compliance actions. In response to much industry interest, FSIS is finalizing guidance documents for label submissions that bear animal raising and non-GMO claims.

International Food Safety & Inspection Program

Current Activities

Equivalence Determinations

In FY 2018, FSIS received six initial equivalence requests from four countries, and provided gap analysis to ten countries with pending initial and reinstatement requests. FSIS has three pending initial equivalence determinations, one expansion of an initial equivalence (request to add a new process category), and one individual sanitary measure equivalence determination.

FSIS staff gave a presentation on FSIS organization to representative of the People's Republic of China, a presentation on FSIS legal, regulatory, and enforcement authority to a group of Cochran fellows from Ethiopia. FSIS developed new templates for the Component Analysis Verification Form (CAVF) and Draft Final Audit Report (DFAR) to ensure consistency in reporting analyses of exporting countries food safety inspection systems and reporting observation and findings identified during on-site verification audits.

Foreign Equivalence Verification Audits

In FY 2018, FSIS completed onsite equivalence verification audits to ensure compliance with equivalence requirements of the FMIA, PPIA, HMSA, and EPIA. FSIS' onsite audits included 14 ongoing equivalence audits for the countries of Australia, Austria, Chile, Denmark, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, and Uruguay. The audits represented the risk-based approach to granting equivalency and verifying the implementation of food safety requirements for products imported in to the United States. (Goal 1) FSIS international auditors are performing USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) verification activities while conducting equivalence verification audits in Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina. The auditors' scope of the verification are requirements listed in 9 CFR Part 94.29 for foot and mouth disease. The cooperative effort improves the overall efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and increase the frequency of onsite audit/surveillance of foreign country's compliance with APHIS statutory requirements and regulations. (Goals 1, 3)

Update of Foreign Audit Policies

In FY 2018, FSIS successfully completed FSIS Directive 9780.1, Revision 1, *Verifying the Ongoing Equivalence of Foreign Food Safety Inspection Systems, August 2018*. This policy will create consistency and enhances the policies and practices for the ongoing equivalency audits. The directive references two updated FSIS White Papers: 1. Methodology on How to Classify Foreign Countries for Prioritizing On-Site Equivalence Verification Audits, and 2. Foreign Site Ranking and Selection Process for Foreign Audits. (Goal 1)

Import Library

In FY 2018, FSIS developed and published the Import Library. The Import Library is a public site providing more transparency to stakeholders regarding the eligibility of countries exporting to the US. The import library also identifies countries that FSIS determined to have an equivalent food safety inspection system but that have stopped exporting to the U.S. for an extended period. Therefore, these countries would have to request reinstatement of equivalence to be eligible to export to the US. As these countries continue to be identified in the regulations, this provides more clarity to the public on their official status. (Goals 1, 2, 3)

Customs and Border Protection Coordination

In FY 2018, FSIS continued efforts to develop and maintain automated data exchange capabilities with the Customs and Border Protections (CBP). To date, over 140 customs brokers are participating in the FSIS data exchange and 72 percent of all import applications received by FSIS are now filed electronically. FSIS also developed outbound message capabilities in Automated Commercial Environment (ACE), which provide messages back to importers through ACE of the status for the shipments re-inspected by FSIS.

Import Re-Inspection Activities

FSIS re-inspects all commercial shipments of meat, poultry, and processed egg products imported to the U.S. from eligible foreign countries at Official Import Inspection Establishments. FSIS inspects every imported shipment to ensure proper certification by the foreign government and examines each shipment for general condition, labeling compliance, and any signs of tampering. Additionally, PHIS assigns additional types of inspection (TOI) to approximately 5.7 percent of the lots presented, including physical examination and laboratory sampling to identify

microbiological pathogens, chemical residues, and to verify species. FSIS determines the intervals for each additional TOI based on compliance history of the foreign establishment, country, and product volume from previous years, and annualized targets for lab sampling TOIs. During FY 2018, importers presented approximately 4.4 billion pounds of meat and poultry products to FSIS for re-inspection from the eligible countries actively exporting product to the United States, and approximately nine million pounds of processed egg products from Canada & The Netherlands. The tables below provide the 2018 statistics for meat, poultry, and egg products:

Table FSIS-16 Imported Meat and Poultry Product (FSIS Goals 1 & 2)

FY 2018	Total Product Presented for Routine reinspection (Pounds) ^a	Product Subjected To Additional TOIs (Pounds) ^b	Total Product Refused Entry (Pounds)	Refused Product Rectified (Pounds) ^c	Total Accepted (Pounds) ^d
TOTAL ^e	4,366,647,938	433,286,177	44,831,917	39,144,796	4,360,960,817

Table FSIS-17 Imported Processed Egg Product

FY 2018	Total Product Presented for Routine reinspection (Pounds) ^a	Product Subjected To Additional TOIs (Pounds) ^b	Total Product Refused Entry (Pounds)	Refused Product Rectified (Pounds) ^c	Total Accepted (Pounds) ^d
TOTAL ^e	9,472,529	1,375,560	138,563	102,122	9,436,088

^a Routine re-inspection includes the Certification and Label Verification Types of Inspection (TOIs) as well as verification of product condition and identification of shipping damage.

^b Type of Inspection (TOI). This column is a subset of the total product presented and identifies the amount of product subjected to more in depth physical or laboratory TOIs in addition to the routine re-inspection TOIs (Certification and Label Verification).

^c Initially refused entry but subsequently brought into compliance and accepted. Issues amenable to rectification include labeling and certification, among others.

^d Total Accepted includes all products that was initially inspected and passed plus product that was initially refused entry but later rectified.

^e Data include *Siluriformes* fish.

FSIS uses the results of these reinspection activities to engage with foreign governments to continually reassess the ongoing equivalence of foreign government inspection systems. When regulatory violations significant to public health are observed during reinspection, FSIS notifies the foreign government requesting an immediate investigation including verification to ensure that corrective actions are implemented by foreign establishments and that those actions are appropriate to address the issue and prevent recurrence. These results are also used to prompt document reviews and FSIS onsite audits as part of FSIS ongoing equivalence verification.

In addition to import re-inspection activities, FSIS also collaborates with other partner government agencies (PGAs) to enhance inspection efforts and maintains a presence at the CBP Import Safety Commercial Targeting and Analysis Center and National Targeting Center. These facilities provide FSIS with access to the CBP's Automated Targeting System (ATS) used to monitor, filter, and prioritize imported shipments. These facilities also provide FSIS with a mechanism to formally request holds, cargo examinations, and issue other instructions to CBP officers at ports of entry. Using ATS and collaborating with CBP and other PGAs, FSIS identifies, targets, and stops high-risk and ineligible shipments closer to if not prior to the time of entry. FSIS identifies new entry filers and provides information about FSIS import requirements to facilitate compliance and reduce the number of product recalls. FSIS also works with CBP to identify, investigate, and assess penalties to parties that repeatedly or intentionally attempt to circumvent FSIS inspection or otherwise import product in contravention to the Acts enforced by FSIS.

FSIS also reviews and processes requests to return U.S. exported products. Since these shipments leave the country and travel to destinations all over the world, FSIS asks numerous questions, requests documents, and extensively reviews all information for each request to identify food defense and food safety concerns to determine whether these shipments are safe to return to U.S. commerce. FSIS coordinates re-inspection of shipments when necessary to ensure returning products are safe, wholesome, and unadulterated. In FY 2018, FSIS reviewed applications to return over 450 shipments of exported meat, poultry, and egg products preventing over 625,000 pounds of adulterated product from returning to U.S. commerce. (Goals 1, 2)

***Siluriformes* Fish and Fish Products Oversight/Reinspection Programs**

In FY 2018, FSIS completed its documentation review of the 13 countries seeking equivalency to continue exporting *Siluriformes* fish and fish products to the U.S. Of the 13 countries who submitted documentation by the September

1, 2017 deadline, FSIS determined that three countries (Vietnam, China, and Thailand) had submitted adequate documentation demonstrating that their documented food safety inspection systems governing *Siluriformes* fish and fish products provided a level of public health protection equivalent to FSIS's inspection system. These three countries then received on-site verification audits. Proposed rules describing this determination were published on September 19, 2018. Currently, 29 certified establishments in Vietnam, China, and Thailand are eligible to export raw *Siluriformes* fish and fish products to the U.S. FSIS terminated eligibility of the other 10 countries (Guyana, Nigeria, Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Canada, Mexico, and The Gambia) and refused entry of products from those countries certified for export on or after March 1, 2018. (Goal 1) FSIS leveraged its presence at CBP to monitor imported shipments of *Siluriformes* fish based on specific criteria. FSIS worked with CBP to ensure that the criteria were built into queries and automated rules designed to identify and prevent the entry of ineligible *Siluriformes* product into U.S. commerce and ensure that eligible products are presented for FSIS import inspection.

In August 2018, FSIS announced the recall of smoked *Siluriformes* fish products from Olufela Yemitan, the Importer of Record, in Texas that were imported from Nigeria, which was ineligible for import of *Siluriformes* to the U.S. Additionally, the products were not presented for import re-inspection upon entry into the U.S.

In FY 2018, FSIS prevented or removed from U.S. commerce over 403,000 pounds of adulterated or ineligible imported *Siluriformes* product. This included 17 *Siluriformes* product shipments from ineligible countries or establishments representing over 62,000 pounds of product. In addition, in FY 2018, FSIS re-inspected over 6,300 lots of imported *Siluriformes* fish and fish products; of these, 15 lots representing over 233,000 pounds were determined to be violative for chemical residues or failed physical examination. (Goals 1, 2)

During first quarter FY 2018, FSIS continued to implement the Third Party Hold and Test procedure, which was applicable when FSIS sampling determined a *Siluriformes* product to be adulterated for chemical residues. In such cases, FSIS required the importer to hold all subsequent shipments of *Siluriformes* products from the same establishment until; 1) each *Siluriformes* product in each shipment was sampled and analyzed by an accredited third-party laboratory; 2) the importer provided a rationale explaining how each specific shipment was chemically independent from previous violative shipments; and 3) FSIS reviewed lab results and supporting rationale and determined admissibility. In December 2017, FSIS discontinued this program and replaced these requirements with intensified levels of re-inspection (FSIS sampling and analysis of subsequent shipments until 15 lots and 15 times the weight of the failed lot pass FSIS re-inspection) to align FSIS import re-inspection of *Siluriformes* with that of imported meat, poultry, and egg products. (Goals 1, 2)

Currently, 72 Official Import Inspection Establishments have Grants of Inspections to facilitate required re-inspection of *Siluriformes* fish, up from 60 in FY 2017.

Foreign Outreach

FSIS designed, developed, and delivered training material for the Colombia International Meat Inspection Seminar November 2017 in Bogota, Colombia. Inspection officials from Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Panama attended the seminar in FSIS inspection methodology. The seminar covered multiple topics, including: FSIS overview and United States regulatory process, FSIS equivalence and self-reporting tool, FSIS import inspection and point-of-entry violations, HACCP methodology, sanitation regulations, FSIS' microbiological and residue sampling programs, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* performance standards in poultry, humane slaughter, food defense, and the new poultry inspection system. (Goals 1, 2 & 3)

Additionally, FSIS designed, developed, and delivered an outreach seminar for Taiwanese officials from legislative offices in Washington, D.C. In August 2018, on Public Policy Making in Agriculture and Food Safety. The seminar covered FSIS audit, assessment, and verification that agricultural imports are produced under United States standard equivalents. The goal was to help countries understand the food safety systems in the United States, including the equivalence process and provide guidance to countries on how to improve their food safety and be eligible to import to the United States. (Goals 1 & 3)

Audits by Foreign Countries

In FY 2018, FSIS coordinated six audits of the U.S. food safety system that foreign auditors conducted to verify whether the U.S. inspection system is equivalent to the food safety inspection system for meat and poultry products for the following countries: Iraq, Japan, Taiwan (2), Korea, and Thailand. There were no findings of non-compliances. (Goals 1, 2)

Electronic Export Application and Certification

FSIS implemented the PHIS electronic Export application and certification component on June 29, 2018. This phased rollout allows US exporters to electronically apply for and receive export certification for the initial 16 countries: Afghanistan, Andorra, Bahamas, Bolivia, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cook Islands, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mozambique, Paraguay, San Marino, Tanzania, and Uganda. The automated system also allows industry to submit applications and receive approvals for their establishments to export meat and poultry products. This is the 9080.3 process required by some countries.

Application submissions can either be manually entered through the user interface (single or multiple entries) or by a system to system upload. With this system, our industry stakeholders are also able to login to PHIS and view the application status. Likewise, foreign governments have the ability to login through the Foreign Country Login feature to review the original export certificate. FSIS also updated the PHIS export component web page with new and reorganized information to assist industry in using the system. (Goals 2, 3)

Export Verification (EV)

In February 2018, the PQAPlus Source Verification Program was implemented for pork exports to Argentina. This EV program ensures the market hogs are sourced from farms that participate in the National Pork Board's PQAPlus program and ensures the pork products derived from these swine are identified and segregated through processing and export. Some South American countries recognize pork products produced under this APHIS Pork Sourcing Verification Program or the AMS PQAPlus EV programs to be at minimal risk for Trichinae and allow the import of products produced under these programs without further Trichinae mitigation.

In May 18, 2018 an EV program was implemented for the export of retorted beef and beef products and heat-processed beef flavors to Australia. This EV program ensures the beef products are derived from animals that are born and raised in the U.S.; or legally imported from Mexico and slaughtered in the U.S. and that carcasses, bovine meat, and meat products are uniquely identified and controlled up until the time of shipment. The EV program also ensures that the specified product requirements are supported by a documented quality management system; and that product is identified and traceable through the system. Only establishments participating in the AMS EV program are eligible to export retorted beef and beef products and heat-processed beef flavors to Australia.

Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure System (PHDCIS)***Current Activities******FSIS IT Security Diagnostics and Mitigation***

FSIS with USDA and DHS continued to deploy DHS's Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation security suites into the FSIS network security perimeter to enhance our security posture. The system monitors over 22,000 network devices and provides the agency with the ability to detect, alert or block cybersecurity attacks. (Goals 2, 3)

FSIS IT Security Monitoring

FSIS enhanced the DMZ security posture through the implementation of Web Content Filtering tools, intruder detection systems, and Sandboxing functionality to combat threats from domestic and foreign entities. These measures, in addition to the security monitoring, user awareness, and training efforts, have reduced the overall security risks in FSIS by 25 percent. (Goals 2, 3)

State Food Safety & Inspection Program***Current Activities******State Inspection Reviews***

FSIS continued to support approximately 1,649 State-inspected establishments under the 27 State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) programs through cost-sharing of allowable State costs. In FY 2018, FSIS completed annual reviews of each of the 27 State MPI programs. The comprehensive State review process consists of two parts: (1) annual self-assessments and (2) triennial onsite reviews, which are used to determine whether the State MPI program enforces requirements "at least equal to" the Federal requirements. In FY 2018, FSIS completed onsite reviews of nine State MPI programs (Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia) and one targeted onsite review in Montana. (Goals 1, 3)

Audit of State MPI Laboratory Methodologies

In FY 2018, FSIS evaluated laboratory methods by using subject matter experts in Microbiology, Chemistry, and Quality Assurance to perform desk audits and review State laboratories and State contract laboratory analytical methodologies to determine overall equivalence compared to FSIS' laboratory methods. In addition, FSIS completed onsite reviews of 12 State MPI program laboratory methods and State contract laboratory methods (Indiana, Iowa,

Louisiana, Maine, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin). The laboratory method criteria are articulated in the amendment to “at least equal to” compliance guidelines. (Goals 1, 3)

Cooperative Interstate Shipment (CIS) Program

The CIS program allows State inspected establishments to ship products interstate. The following five States currently have cooperative agreements to participate in the CIS program: Indiana, North Dakota, Maine, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The total number of establishments selected to participate in the CIS program increased from 35 at the end of FY 2017 to 42 at the close of FY 2018; a net increase of seven. Distribution of the 42 Selected Establishments by State is as follows: Indiana - ten, Maine – zero, North Dakota – three, Ohio - 15, and Wisconsin – 14. August 27, 2018, FSIS finalized the Maine Cooperative Interstate Shipment Program agreement and Maine has one establishment preparing to come into the CIS program. Missouri provided a written request to participate in July; however, the FSIS eligibility criteria review is pending further support from Missouri. (Goal 1, Objective 1.1.1)

FSIS performed onsite and record reviews of State Cooperative Interstate Shipment Programs. FY 2018 visits performed by the District Selected Establishment Coordinators (SECs) verified each State to be providing the “same as” Federal inspection requirements and the establishments to be operating in a manner that is consistent with the FMIA or PPIA and the implementing regulations in 9 CFR Part 300 to end (9 CFR 332.7(a) and 381.517(a). In FY 2018, the Office of Field Operations (OFO) discontinued the designation of an “Informal” visit, determining the visits are either nonregulatory and therefore considered “Outreach” or regulatory and therefore either an “Initial” or “Verification” visit type. FY 2018 SEC visits are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table FSIS-18 Number of Verification Visits Performed by the SECs in FY 2018 by State and Verification Type

State	# Outreach Visits	# Initial Visits	# Verification Visits	# Informal Visits	# Total Visits
Indiana	4	1 ^a	24	0	29
Maine	0	0	0	0	0
North Dakota	0	0	9	1	10
Ohio	4	4	25	0	33
Wisconsin	8	2	26	3	39
TOTAL	16	7	84	4	111

^a The initial visit was a follow-up to an initial survey visit in 2017.

Public Health Information System (PHIS) for State MPI Programs

FSIS continues to work with State MPI program directors to coordinate ongoing development of enhancements of the State’s PHIS State functionality that mirrors the Federal PHIS. Ongoing communications between FSIS and State officials resulted in increased investments to support the refinement of PHIS capabilities (plant profile, domestic, predictive analytics, policy issues, and “at least equal to criteria”) for State MPI programs. (Goals 1, 3)

State IT Program

During FY 2018, FSIS successfully coordinated the ordering and distribution of 44 Windows 10 Computers to 11 different State Programs and upgraded 315 State Computers to Windows 10 for 10 different State Programs. FSIS successfully approved, processed, and tracked for invoicing – 259 pieces of equipment for 23 different State programs throughout the year. The FY 2018 Supplemental Agreements for the 23 State Programs were 91 percent complete. The States of Oklahoma and South Carolina did not return signed FY18 Supplemental Agreement. Currently, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota and Wyoming do not have IT Supplemental Agreement. (Goals 2, 3)

In-Commerce State Activities

In FY 2018, FSIS continued to provide support to the AssuranceNet/In-Commerce System (ANet/ICS) State program users. The successful integration of State programs into ANet/ICS provides State users with the ability to access five key functional areas in ANet/ICS (firm information, surveillance, investigation, product control, and enforcement). This joint system usage maintains increased communication and information sharing across programs, also providing opportunities for joint investigations with State partners to become more efficient and responsive to foodborne illness outbreaks. This integration of the State MPI programs in ANet/ICS also results in an enhanced execution of mission critical public health functions across FSIS and State programs. (Goals 1, 3)

Federal State Audit Branch (FSAB) Top to Bottom Quality Assurance Assessment

FSIS completed an audit of FSAB to determine whether program officials are effectively implementing policies, procedures, and practices specified in statutes, regulations, directives, and standard operating procedures to conduct

comprehensive review processes for State MPI programs. The assessment concluded that the FSAB program officials are implementing current standard operating procedures that meet the requirements outlined in the statutes, regulations, and directives. (Goal 3)

Cross-Cutting Accomplishments

Current Activities

Public Health Information System (PHIS)

FSIS fielded two major PHIS releases in FY 2018 along with 16 patches. These releases delivered upgrades to the PHIS Exports, Imports Inspection, Domestic Inspection, and the Surveillance, Complaints, and Outbreak Response Enterprise (SCORE) modules along with bug fixes and data changes. Additionally, FSIS completed three oracle upgrades and migrations, shut down the Disconnected State, and shut down the M2K lab sampling application. In FY 2018, FSIS enrolled the first sixteen countries in the PHIS electronic Export application and certificate module.

FSIS also made significant progress in moving PHIS from co-located managed systems at the National Information Technology Center (NITC) to the NITC Platform as a Service (PaaS) operating environment. Completion of the move to PaaS is targeted for completion in early FY 2019. (Goals 1, 2, 3)

PHIS Reports

Because of PHIS, the Agency is collecting more data about inspection activities than it has in the past, resulting in a greater need for reports summarizing this data. FSIS has continued to expand the suite of available PHIS reports.

There are now 231 PHIS reports available to users based on their PHIS role, and there are 31 reports ready to be published. These reports include 107 Federal reports, 65 State reports, 43 Multi-State, four industry reports and 12 import reports, containing information about lab sampling, slaughter, inspection tasks, establishment profile, resource management, performance measures, imports and industry. New versions of existing reports were published 104 times in response to 122 user change requests.

FSIS monitors, analyzes, and reports on the data collected in PHIS. This information is passed both to IPP so that they can use the best possible food safety information, and to agency managers at HQ and the district offices so that they can monitor performance. In addition, reports are available to State and industry users of PHIS. The table below tracks the use of data analysis reports in PHIS by different program areas within FSIS. From December 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018, a total of 116,333 reports were run. Values are not available from October 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017 due to a database issue.

Table FSIS-19 PHIS Data Analysis Report Count

Program Areas	Reports Run	Percent
Office of Field Operations	65,778	56.54%
Industry	37,209	31.98%
State	8,810	7.57%
Office of Data Integration and Food Protection	1,745	1.50%
Office of Public Health Science	1,227	1.05%
Office of Investigation, Enforcement and Audit	564	.48%
Office of the Chief Information Officer	316	.27%
Officer of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review	316	.27%
Office of Management	308	.26%
Office of the Administrator	56	.05%
Other	4	.00%
Total	116,333	100.00%

Public Health Information System (PHIS) Alerts

PHIS alerts are data driven generated food safety messages that IPP receive via email and/or system notification allowing IPP to proactively react to food safety information. These alerts serve a variety of purposes, including ensuring that IPP are receiving the correct sampling tasks, ensuring that food defense activities are being tracked, as well as notifying IPP that an establishment has an elevated Public Health Regulation (PHR) non-compliance rate that is close to the threshold for Public Health Risk Assessment (PHRE)/Food Safety Assessment (FSA) scheduling.

FSIS created and automated additional PHIS alerts to notify inspectors, supervisors, and HQ personnel of emerging risks and enable resources to be focused where they will most benefit public health. Twelve PHIS alerts were successfully deployed in FY 2018 for example FSIS developed alerts to:

- Inform establishments when they fail to meet the poultry performance standard or half of the poultry performance standard.
- Inform establishments when their noncompliance rate reaches the cut point for early warning.
- Monitor domestic sampling loading to PHIS to ensure domestic sampling is available and on-time for field staff.
- Monitor imports intensified types of inspection errors such as duplication of intensified lots.
- Remind establishments to update their establishment profile to comply with updated product groups

Data Requests

FSIS continued monitoring and responding to routine and ad hoc data requests. FSIS processed on average more than 36 ad hoc data requests per month including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

FSIS developed and executed a plan to conduct training sessions with FSIS staff, focused on highlighting all employees' responsibilities under FOIA, to ensure knowledge of FSIS processes and requirements, while improving the quality and timeliness of FOIA responses, thereby lessening resource expenditures in the FOIA office. In FY 2018, the FOIA office conducted seven trainings for program areas at headquarters and for several district field offices. This exceeded the target by two trainings. Additionally, to promote transparency and enhance customer service, the FOIA office conducted four briefings for external stakeholders that focused on the FOIA process. Since the beginning of the fiscal year, FSIS eliminated all FY 2016 backlogged requests and reduced the backlog of requests from 2017 by 95 percent. In addition to those requests, the FOIA Office received 494 new requests (40 percent increase), the highest received in previous years.

Data Quality

The objective of the FSIS Data Quality Initiative is to improve the accuracy and efficiency of reporting and data driven decisions. The data quality team is documenting and analyzing known and new data issues, implementing data corrections, and providing detailed recommendations for preventing future issues.

- FSIS identified existing data quality issues and, coordinated to resolve 226 issues (out of 440 total)—68 of which included data corrections in PHIS.
- FSIS implemented an enhancement to resolve the population of inaccurate dates in the Point of Entry Violations (POEV) module by restructuring the association for the Date Re-inspected field.
- FSIS created an Allergen Flag table that indicates the allergen status of every establishment each month that is used for easily identifying specific establishments.

Innovations

FSIS received and evaluated 95 new technology submissions in FY 2018. New technology submissions include, but are not limited to, new or reformulated ingredients, online reprocessing systems, offline reprocessing substances, waiver requests to participate *Salmonella* Initiative Program (SIP). (Goal 2)

Analysis Activities

FSIS initiated several significant analysis projects this year to include, on-going analysis of the NPIS, exploratory analysis of residue violations in the NRP based on the sources identified as responsible for the violation, analysis of recalls related to foreign material contamination, evaluations of the *Siluriformes* and Raw Beef Products sampling programs as well as several rapid analyses to support the agency's activities throughout the year.

FSIS created a model to analyze and predict the stun methods effectiveness in all the large livestock slaughter plants. This model is used by DVMS for Humane Handling activities. FSIS also evaluated different approaches to categorize establishments based on the *Salmonella* performance standards.

This year FSIS expanded its enterprise reporting capabilities through the implementation of a Tableau server. Training was provided, and several workbooks have been developed to provide information on import activities, establishment categories, *Salmonella* sampling and residue violations.

During FY 2018, FSIS upgraded the PHIS analytics capability to provide advanced data analysis using massive and parallel screening techniques for foodborne illnesses caused by organisms such as *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *E. coli*, and

Non 0157 from FSIS lab samples. FSIS also upgraded a reporting platform that will help PHIS Reports run more efficiently and support new formats of data. FSIS developed Residue Violator Tracking (RVT), hosted on an Analytical Portal, which will allow data interchange between FDA and FSIS. This will enable FDA to update FSIS data with additional information on suppliers. Also, a file storage feature has been added to RVT to allow FDA to upload case files. (Goals 2, 3)

FSIS developed and implemented quarterly letters to individual establishments providing sample results and comparative performance information with respect to applicable FSIS pathogen and residue verification testing programs to aid establishments in process control evaluation and potential improvements.

Advanced Analytics

FSIS continued to implement its Five-Year Advanced Analytics Plan, which outlines the current State of advanced analytics at FSIS and provides a vision for developing this program over five years. FSIS advanced analytics is focused on four main areas: reporting and alerting, field support and maintenance, big data analytics, and data sharing. The five-year plan provides the framework to increase capacity, speed, and quality of the data accessed from systems/databases, increase the level and complexity of analysis capability, implement more automation to better use analysis resources, make the best use of current and newly available data, acquire and use data from previously untapped resources, such as being able to perform analysis of the narrative in a non-compliance report (NR) in PHIS; use data to predict potential hazards and either prevent or respond faster to these hazards, and shape lab sampling initiatives.

FSIS continued to enhance and refine content and functionality of the FSIS Analytics Portal. The Analytics Portal is a one stop shop for data, analysis, and analytical tools. It provides enhanced search capabilities, operational dashboards, access to automated analytical tools, automated reports, prepackaged FSIS data and reports, FSIS districts/circuits/establishments maps, and guidance for access to FSIS databases and additional analysis tools.

The 3rd annual FSIS Analytics Conference was held in June 2018. The two-and-a-half-day conference included a session with talks from data experts from different agencies in USDA. The event brought together more than 180 analysts from FSIS and other USDA agencies and fostered internal collaboration and analysis.

Additionally, FSIS participated in regular workgroup meetings with CDC and States to discuss the T-Cube Web Interface (TCWI) and PulseNet Reports—which are a more user-friendly interface to interact with the TCWI, which enables computationally efficient analysis and visualization of even the most massive time series datasets.

FSIS also, in conjunction with CDC, updated training manuals and trained FSIS employees, State users, and other authorized Federal public health users to use the PulseNet reports and TCWI. Trainings have occurred at various PulseNet meetings throughout the year as well as via remote session.

Trend Analysis for FSIS Incident Management Tracking System

Trends in significant incidents reported in the FSIS incident management system (FIMS) were tracked to inform Agency policy and preparedness plans. The modernized FIMS launch occurred in August 2018, with enhancements in September 2018. These activities helped to improve data quality and the Agency's ability to track trends earlier and with more accuracy in FIMS.

Performance Measurement Dashboards

The agency developed national and district level dashboards to monitor strategic and annual plan measures, a dashboard to monitor the Early Warning Alert Strategic Plan Measure, and a dashboard to identify relationships between establishments receiving Early Warning Alerts with those receiving PHREs.

Foodborne Illness Attribution Achievements and Inter-Agency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration (IFSAC)

FSIS in conjunction with CDC and FDA, is working to improve coordination of Federal food safety analytic efforts and address cross-cutting priorities for food safety data collection, analysis, and use. Projects and studies aim to identify foods that are important sources of illnesses. The current focus of IFSAC's activities is foodborne illness source attribution, defined as the process of estimating the most common food sources responsible for specific foodborne illnesses. Representatives from several FSIS Program Areas actively participate in IFSAC projects, the IFSAC Technical Workgroup, and provide senior-level executives to serve as IFSAC Steering Committee (SC) members. Major FSIS/IFSAC accomplishments include:

- FSIS served as the Chair of IFSAC.

- In December 2017, IFSAC hosted a public webinar on foodborne illness source attribution estimates for 2013 for *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Campylobacter*, as well as released a complementary report on the analysis.
- Published an article in Foodborne Pathogens and Disease entitled “An Updated Scheme for Categorizing Foods Implicated in Foodborne Disease Outbreaks: A Tri-Agency Collaboration” to develop a new categorization scheme for classifying outbreaks, as well as development of a new manuscript detailing the methods used to estimate harmonized attribution fractions was accepted for publication (anticipated publication mid-December 2017) in *Foodborne Pathogens and Disease*.
- Finally, IFSAC has continued its communication efforts with five presentations scheduled at three different scientific conferences this year.
- Development of a Wrap-Up document summarizing IFSAC accomplishments during its first strategic plan.
- A draft manuscript on “A New Scheme for Categorizing Foods Implicated in Foodborne Disease

Conference for Food Protection

FSIS served as an advisor on the Executive Board for the Conference for Food Protection (CFP). Based on FSIS recommendations, the CFP agreed to include a link in the Food Code Annex to FSIS’ guidance on chicken livers and to the creation of a committee to develop guidance for roaster pigs, which FSIS is co-chairing. (Goal 1)

Personnel Security

FSIS Personnel Security initiated 1,374 investigation requests; completed adjudications for 485 employees requiring an access pass; and adjudicated over 500 closed investigations. FSIS accomplished these results while maintaining a timeliness rate of 11 days for submission, which is lower than the 14-day requirement. In addition, the Agency lowered the rejection rate to 4.4 percent, which is lower than the 5 percent requirement rate, set by “end to end automation,” defined in E.O. 13467. Further evidence of the quality of submissions by FSIS, was a five percent record low call back rate by the Office of Personnel Management of follow-up questioning, representing increased efficiency and economy of the FSIS process. (Goal 3)

Physical Security-Linc Pass Credentialing

The Agency successfully maintained a 98 percent rate of access pass (LincPass) credentialing through September 2018, exceeding the Agency goal of 97 percent. Through effective processing, the Agency was able to initiate credentialing of the access pass within 48 hours of identifying the need.

By streamlining logistical protocol, the Agency was able to capitalize on initial employee training administration, so that 89 percent of inspection employees had their access badge awaiting after their successful class completion and can immediately join the operational work force without delay in FY 2018. (Goal 2)

Procurement Planning Initiative

To improve coordination of acquisition planning, the Agency engaged all procurement stakeholders in reviewing the acquisition lifecycle for FY 2018 procurements. This was an interactive exploration of economical options which included over 60 program interests. The Agency then held individual meetings with the stakeholders to:

- Identify program level requirements
- Develop procurement milestones and activities within each program
- Monitor each procurement throughout the year to ensure milestones were met.

Because of these efforts the Agency was able to achieve its FY 2018 target of 70 percent efficiency in procurement lead time, implementation time, and closeout time combined. (Goal 3)

Office Space

FSIS consolidated office space and cancelled the lease on one floor of Patriots Plaza 3 in the National Capital Region saving \$1.7 million per year for all remaining years on the lease.

Material Management Service Center

FSIS conducted multiple projects to audit holdings at the Material Management Service Center (MSSC)

- The staff responsible for outreach and publications was able to eliminate outdated and unused publications, which reduced annual storage fees.
- The staff responsible for forms identified several outdated forms that were not compliant, removed unused publications from storage, and stated working with OMB to achieve compliance where necessary.

- The staff responsible for nonmonetary awards identified holdings of over 10,000 shirts and jackets that were not available to supervisors. They were able to ship these out to the FSIS offices around the country, which not only eliminated large annual storage fees (many of these items were more than 10-years old), but this turned into a moral boosting project in the field.

Workers' Compensation

FSIS achieved a cost savings of \$1 million, for the 3rd consecutive FY, by returning injured employees to work through the Alternative Duty Program, Work Hardening Program, and job offers. The agency also saved a total of \$57,612 in prescription and medical costs through the use of the Department's pharmacy program. The Agency achieved the goal of timely filing claims forms (CA-1, CA-2 CA-7) for 86 percent of claims, which exceeds the Department of Labor's 83 percent benchmark established under the 2016 Presidential Power Initiative. (Goal 3)

Workplace Violence

FSIS processed 503 new workplace violence complaints and closed 360 complaints. In addition, the agency created a Critical Incident Response Group Risk Rating scale designed to clearly identify violence risk for workplace violence complaints. FSIS continued its focus on education to mitigate the risks of workplace violence by training 83 new supervisors and 35 union representatives. (Goal 3)

Reasonable Accommodation

FSIS continued its focus on restructuring and rebranding the Reasonable Accommodation program. This included dedicating additional staff to the program, increasing attention on case processing to mitigate future litigation situations, and providing training to managers and supervisors. The Agency provided training at eight new and experienced supervisor meetings throughout the year. The sessions focused on the importance of the interactive process between the supervisor and the employee and clarified roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. FSIS processed 254 new Accommodation requests. (Goal 3)

FSIS leadership and Development Training

To improve supervisory employee engagement, FSIS conducted monthly training on topics such as Conflict Management Resolution & Management, Ethics and Leadership (two sessions) Basic Workers' Compensation (sessions), Labor and Employee Benefits, Delivering Constructive Feedback, and the FSIS New Supervisor Sponsorship Program "Pilot," and; in addition, continued support of New Supervisor Training and Experienced Supervisor Training Programs. With the goal of maintaining a well-trained, empowered and engaged workforce, FSIS launched the Team Leader Training Program "Pilot," and offered a variety (over 60 sessions) of competency-based, open enrollment training as well as a formal Mentoring Program.

Recruitment of Veterans

FSIS recruited a significant amount of veterans during Fiscal Year 2018 (20.5 percent) up from 11 percent in FY17 and was very close to meeting USDA's veteran hiring goal of 25 percent of all new hires. FSIS was singled out by the USDA Military Veterans to Agricultural Liaison Office as the USDA agency that has recruited the most veterans in FY 2018. In addition, the agency collaborated with diverse Federal agencies to explore possible options to legally implement a Pre-Apprenticeship Program for transitioning service members. (Goal 3)

Labor Relations

To put more technology and access to information into the hands of employees, FSIS collaborated with the National Joint Council of Food Inspection Locals, the Agency successfully implemented the eDevice Pilot Initiative in two Districts: Tar Heel, NC (Raleigh) and Dodge City, KS (Springdale). Heading into FY 2019, the Agency is on par with plans to pilot additional locations in the Philadelphia District. (Goal 3)

Employee Relations

FSIS maintained an average case processing time of 65 days for both adverse and disciplinary actions in FY 2018. The average Administrative Grievance processing time was 88 days. Ninety days is the standard time range for both.

The Drug Free Workplace program was reinvigorated in FY 2018. Specialists are working with their districts and organizations to provide information, statistics and steps involved with the Drug Free Workplace Program to make the process run as efficiently as possible.

To improve leadership skills for field supervisors, FSIS launched district level engagement and training to provide critical information in the areas of employee relations, reasonable accommodation, and drug free workplace programs. Training Specialists traveled to the Winston-Salem circuit in the Raleigh District Office from July 31, through August 2, 2018, visiting four different locations, including three establishments and conducted six

presentations. LER was able to provide in person presentations to approximately, eighty agency employees on the Agency’s Drug Free Workplace Program. (Goal 3)

Employee Engagement

In FY 2018, FSIS developed the draft Employee Engagement Action Plan with key deliverables to address 1) leadership accountability; 2) employee recognition; 3) onboarding/mission comprehension; and 4) career development. These areas address specific questions in the 2017 Federal Employee View Point Survey where FSIS scored below 65percent positive responses. (Goal 3)

FSIS communicated directly with employees through employee Town Halls. The Town Halls included the capability for employees to submit questions via live chat or over the phone. Additionally, FSIS published weekly issues of the very popular online newsletter known as the *Wednesday Newline*. *The Beacon* is the agency’s more comprehensive monthly newsletter and is published online, sent via email, and a hard copy is also sent to establishments for employees without internet access. In *The Beacon*, senior leadership discusses priorities important to employees. The publication also features employees in its faces of food safety articles. Finally, *The Beacon* took an employee centric-focus with a monthly column about employee engagement. FSIS continues to publish the *Employee Connections* on a quarterly basis. *Employee Connections* is an employee-focused newsletter that shares health and wellness information, employee-submitted items and photos, and human interest—yet work relevant articles.

Student Employment Program (SEP)

In FY 2018, the Student Employment Program was successfully revamped to maximize return on investment by directing managers on how to optimize the use of the program to benefit the needs of the Agency. The Student Employment Program was promoted throughout FSIS to be utilized in the succession planning process as an avenue to fill vacant positions by providing internship opportunities with the intent to convert those interns to full-time, permanent employees upon graduation and successful completion of the internship program. There were 163 interns in FY 2018, which included 106 Pathways (five of these were the Secretary’s OneUSDA interns) 20 third-party, and 37 volunteers. Eight interns were converted to fulltime permanent employees after successfully completing the program. (Goal 3)

Shared Services

During FY 2018, FSIS successfully provided Human Resources (HR) shared services support to several Agencies within USDA to include Food and Nutrition Services and the Office of the General Counsel. Support included Position Classification, Staff Acquisition, Personnel Processing, and several administrative support functions provided by HR. Use of shared services promotes the Secretary’s goal of a OneUSDA and maximizes the use of Department resources. (Goal 3)

Small business contracting

In FY 2018, FSIS continued to exceed all small business targets for socially disadvantaged contractors, including veteran/woman-owned/HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zones). In FY 2018 FSIS awarded 61 percent of its contracts to small businesses. (Goal 3)

Table FSIS-20 Small Business Contracting

Socio-Economic Category	% of Awards
Small Business	60.7%
Small Disadvantaged Business	43.6%
Woman-Owned Business	24.3%
HUBZone Small Business	15.7%
Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business	4%
Strategic Source Achievements	39%
Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System Completion	46.7%

^a Contracts can be in more than one category

Civil Rights (CR)

The Agency processed 138 informal complaints and resolved 96 for a resolution rate of 70 percent, which is considerably higher than the Federal government rate of 55 percent. In FY 2018, 60 percent of aggrieved parties accepted Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) offers during the informal stage of the EEO process and 56 percent of complainants accepted ADR offers during the formal stage of the process. This yielded an overall acceptance rate

of 59 percent, which was higher than the overall target acceptance rate of 43 percent that was established in the Agency's Strategic Plan. Feedback obtained from the surveys indicated the Agency's ADR process is effective in resolving conflict and reducing the formal complaint inventory. Eighty percent of the participants reported being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the ADR program and 84 percent said they would recommend the ADR program to a colleague.

To assist in increasing the ADR acceptance rate and bring awareness to the ADR program, Civil Rights Staff (CRS) developed and issued the FY 2018 EEO/CR mandatory ADR training to the FSIS workforce. Additional training was also provided to the Senior Executive Service employees on the EEO process and the role of a resolving official. Additionally, CRS delivered EEO/CR trainings upon request at various FLS meetings, work unit meetings and new supervisor trainings. Topics included: Overview of the EEO Process, Overview of Civil Rights Staff Programs and Services, Diversity and Inclusion, Anti-Harassment, and Anti-Reprisal. (Goal 3)

To ensure compliance with guidance contained in Management Directive 715 (MD-715), CRS completed five Compliance Assistance, Reviews, and Evaluations during FY 2018. Additionally, CRS completed nine Civil Rights Title VI reviews of the Agency's Federally Assisted State Meat and Poultry Inspection Programs. The States that were reviewed were Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. (Goal 3)

CRS reviewed and completed three Civil Rights Impact Analyses (CRIA) to determine if proposed changes disparately impacted any protected group(s). CRIsAs that were conducted for the following: (1) renewal of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods; (2) renewal of the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection; (3) FSIS' reorganization and (4) Office of Policy and Program Development's reorganization. In addition to the CRIsAs, CRS also reviewed 43 Agency policies to determine if they would have a disparate impact on employees with respect to the various protected bases. (Goal 3)

FSIS Web Presence

Digital communication enables FSIS to quickly reach its diverse audience. FSIS delivers news, food defense information and training packages, policy issuances, compliance guidance, import/export requirements, workforce training materials and more via its main website, <https://www.fsis.usda.gov>. Documents distributed through the FSIS public website represent the efforts of all FSIS program areas and support the agency's strategic goals.

The public website is a window into FSIS activities and for our stakeholders, a means of participating in the policy development process. For many, the site is their only direct contact with FSIS and their primary source of agency-related information. In FY 2018, the FSIS public website recorded 15,716,075 views, an average of 1.3 million page views per month.

FSIS continues to see more customers accessing the web site through their mobile devices. Approximately 54 percent of the 8,875,198 million visits to the FSIS home page during the year were made using a mobile device, an increase from about 42 percent the previous year.

Over time, the website has become the primary distribution channel for items that were formerly print publications. One notable example is the Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products Inspection Directory, the most downloaded item on the site. Online availability not only increases the reach and accessibility of this information, it greatly reduces the time required to produce and disseminate document revisions. This Directory is also available as a mobile app for Apple and Android smartphones.

A digital subscription service notifies subscribers of additions and changes to the FSIS public website. In FY 2018, 356,396 subscribers with a total of 2,235,514 subscriptions received more than 87 million e-mail bulletins regarding their chosen topics. This direct notification is particularly popular and effective in publicizing recall information. The digital subscription service (the GovDelivery Communications Cloud, from Granicus) continues to show growth in the number of subscribers (+25.78 percent over last 12 months) and total subscriptions (+21.29 percent over last 12 months). More website page views are attributed to this source than to any other referrer. Many of the 48 topics currently listed for subscription are related to import/export issues; important changes to country requirements can be conveyed to the subscriber base in a matter of hours.

AskFSIS System

In FY 2018, FSIS supported effective policy implementation by FSIS through the askFSIS system. The askFSIS database provides online answers to technical, inspection-related questions. In FY 2018, askFSIS customers visited the site 637,231 times, conducted 225,674 searches, and viewed 739,123 published answers. The askFSIS customers

also submitted 24,704 questions for individual answers. The table below provides information regarding askFSIS correspondents who submitted questions. Roughly, 45 percent of the 24,704 questions submitted to askFSIS came from FSIS employees.

Table FSIS-21 Information Requests by Correspondence FY 2018

Customer Type	# of Questions Submitted	Percentage of Total %
Establishment - Large	1,690	6.8%
Establishment - Other	297	1.2%
Establishment - Small	3,617	14.6%
Establishment – Very Small	1,787	7.2%
FSIS – District Office	84	0.3%
FSIS – EIAO	451	1.8%
FSIS – Frontline Supervisors	330	1.3%
FSIS – Other	988	4.0%
FSIS at Establishment – Large	2,873	11.6%
FSIS at Establishment – Other	662	2.7%
FSIS at Establishment – Small	3,376	13.7%
FSIS at Establishment – Very Small	1,947	7.9%
Government Agency Other than FSIS	573	2.3%
Industry – Other	2,405	9.7%
No Value	1,566	6.3%
Other		8.3%
TOTAL	24,704	

Tribal Relations

During FY 2018, FSIS provided information on inspection, labeling, and regulations, relating to the establishment of new slaughter and processing facilities of The Blackfeet Tribe of Montana, the Hoopa Tribe of California, and the Ute Mountain Tribe of Utah. Also received a request from The Navajo Nation for information and technical services for establishing slaughter and inspection facilities, labeling, mobile slaughter and reprocessing.

Education and Outreach Accomplishments

Current Activities

FoodSafety.gov

In FY 2018, FSIS continued to work closely with those at FoodSafety.gov to promote content on the cross-Federal, consumer-focused website. More than 12 million web pages were viewed on the website, which is consistent with the metrics from FY 2017. Four of the top five pages on the website are directly related to USDA and *Food Safe Families* campaign messaging. This continued high traffic to FoodSafety.gov can be attributed to a variety of factors, including robust outreach FSIS conducted during FY 2018. More than 20 blogs from FSIS were posted on FoodSafety.gov during this fiscal year.

Food Safety Discovery Zone

The USDA Food Safety Discovery Zone (FSDZ) continues to be a highly visible part of FSIS' public health mission and a key component of the agency's public health outreach to consumers. This year the FSIS Discovery Zone was updated to allow for a new self-guided experience in addition to the existing classroom style show. This ability to offer two types of visitor experiences greatly expands the vehicle's usability and reduces the number of personnel required to staff it. During FY 2018, the FSDZ traveled to Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. The FSDZ achieved more than 38,000 direct connections, an 89 percent increase from FY 2017. The FSDZ exhibited at five events, with events focusing on at-risk demographics, underserved communities, rural families and military families. The marquee event of this year was the Pennsylvania Farm Show, at which the FSDZ achieved more than 25,000 direct connections with consumers, including with Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding.

FoodKeeper Application

The FoodKeeper app remains an effective way to educate consumers about proper food storage and its relationship to safe food handling behaviors. The application provides consumers with information about safe handling and storage times for hundreds of food items. The data the FoodKeeper app uses to serve its storage timelines to users was updated this year. The total number of foods and beverages the app includes storage information about expanded in FY 2018 to more than 650 items. More than 35,000 downloads of the application this fiscal year brought cumulative download totals of the application to nearly 200,000.

Ask Karen

“Ask Karen” is FSIS’ consumer food safety virtual-representative and the most popular feature on the FSIS Website. The Ask Karen database received 56,504 calls, and 5,077 email questions and 3.5 million answers were viewed in FY 2018. The Ask Karen chat received 3,292 chat requests in FY 2018. Answer views on the service have continued to increase annually and were once again up 20 percent from Ask Karen views last fiscal year.

Social Media

During FY 2018, FSIS used a variety of social media networks to broaden engagement with key stakeholders to educate the public on recalls, foodborne illness, and safe food handling practices. FSIS used Twitter (including Twitter in Spanish), Facebook (including one Spanish post monthly). FSIS used pop culture topics like International Women’s Day, Earth Day, MLB All-Star weekend, and Elephant Day to promote food safety messages to audiences engaged in discussion about those trending topics. Across all social media platforms, FSIS generated 426,000 total engagements (up 18 percent compared to last fiscal year’s total of 360,000) and 22,147,153 total impressions (up 10 percent compared to last fiscal year’s total of about 20 million).

- The [@USDAFoodSafety](#) Twitter account and the FoodSafety.gov Facebook account continued to see growth throughout the year due to the ongoing strategy of using non-traditional topics to communicate food safety messages.
 - FSIS has seen outstanding success in Twitter followers, reaching a new total of 1,427,346 followers.
 - The FoodSafety.gov Facebook account ended the year with a total of 215,515 fans.
- In FY 2018, FSIS has continued to see high engagement with traditional food safety messages accompanied by infographics.
 - For example, FSIS shared the *Have a Food Safe Summer* and the *Is it Done Yet?* infographic for major holiday observances (i.e. Memorial, Independence, and Labor Days) where consumers are known to grill and eat outdoors.

Messages about severe weather and power outages also made a significant impact during Hurricanes Lane and Florence. Before, during and after Hurricane Florence made landfall in the mid-Atlantic, FSIS distributed food safety messages related to severe weather, flooding and power outages. One of these messages during this period became the agency’s most successful Twitter message to date. Over the week-long course of the disaster’s arrival and impact, the messages FSIS posted generated nearly 1.6 million impressions and 75,000 engagements. This impression figure is higher than what FSIS’ account achieved monthly during nine of this year’s 12 months. The engagements figure is the highest monthly engagement the account has ever seen since its launch in February 2009.

Hispanic Outreach

To educate the Hispanic community about safe food handling, FSIS continued posting messages in Spanish on Facebook once a month achieving a total of 78,759 impressions and 1,322 engagements. This fiscal year, the FSIS Spanish language Twitter account achieved a total of 436,500 impressions, 9,839 engagements and 635 new followers. This represents a follower’s growth of 13.8 percent.

Constituent Outreach Publications

FSIS communicated with constituents, including consumers, industry and consumer representatives, via weekly issues of *Constituent Update*, a publication featuring articles pertaining to agency policy and regulatory changes, FSIS sampling program results, international trade issues, and other FSIS-related issues of importance to industry and consumer groups. This publication currently has nearly 26,000 subscribers. FSIS also published news releases that offered food safety tips to assist consumers during power outages; natural disasters, such as wildfires, tornados, and floods; holidays, such as July 4, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day; and special occasions, such as going back to school, spring festivities, and the Super Bowl.

Educational Publications

FSIS streamlined its publication process, which reduced warehouse costs to the agency and reduced staff time used to process publication requests. This was accomplished by first assessing and evaluating publications for duplication

and overlap of messaging, which resulted in reducing the number of publication types from 63 to 22. Staff then began a marketing effort to move the excess and outdated items. This effort reduced the amount of space used in the warehouse from 17,200 cubic feet in FY 2017, which cost the agency \$157,854.28 to 3,760 cubic feet, which costs the agency \$29,733.60 in FY 2018, saving the agency an estimated \$128,000 (down 80 percent). With a more manageable amount of publications/educational items, staff time used to submit orders into the Salesforce system was reduced from 5-6 minutes per order to 1-2 minutes per order, allowing staff to focus more on consumer education efforts. In total, FSES distributed 2,958,832 publications during FY 2018, an increase of more than 40 percent.

Partnerships

In FY 2018, FSIS continued to establish partnerships with national, State and local organizations as part of a grassroots effort to spread the message about food safety. In FY 2018, FSES maintained partnerships with 38 organization. Several successful events and outreach opportunities with these partners included:

- Partnered with the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to hold Food Safety for Older Adults training presentations at 52 senior centers in 17 States and Washington, D.C. One presentation was given in Spanish. An estimated 1,526 older adults and their caregivers attended the presentations.
- Partnered with the American Public Health Association (APHA) to provide five guest blogs to the APHA ‘Get Ready Blog’.
- FSIS participated in the APHA National Public Health Week Twitter chat that resulted in 78 million impressions for the entire chat.
- Partnered with the American Cancer Society and participating in 38 Relay for Life events nationwide, distributing food safety information.
- Summer food safety messages were featured by the American Diabetes Association in their Diabetes Forecast Magazine, which has a circulation of 500,000 key at-risk readers.
- Conducted two podcast interviews with Food Safety Magazine about Thanksgiving and Summer consumer safe food handling.
- Worked with The Food Channel to publish blogs about consumer safe food handling across their digital platforms.
- Provided food safety tips in English and Spanish at Sharing the Hope Health Fair, Kern County, Calif.
- Train the trainers on food safety in Spanish at the Promotoras de Salud (Health Promoters) of Kern County, Bakersfield, Calif.
- Presented food safety information in Spanish at the Housing and Health Fair at the Central American Resource Center, Washington, D.C.

Media Tours

The media goal for FSIS during FY 2018 was to proactively place 434 stories by Sept. 30, 2018 (this is a 5 percent increase from the 413 stories placed in FY 2017). FSIS exceeded this goal by proactively pitching and placing 483 stories, surpassing the original goal by 10 percent. This success came through media tours and FSIS pitching efforts that spanned six seasonal campaigns and included media outreach during hurricane and other severe weather, as well as the release of the first observational study examining the behavior of consumers in the kitchen and policy announcements. Highlights of this successful outreach included:

- Coverage by leading national outlets including the New York Times, CNN, NBC News, USA Today, Time, Forbes, Yahoo, and TODAY.
- Prominent local print/digital coverage including the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Charlotte Observer, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Columbus Dispatch, Austin Statesman, and PaLm Beach Post.
- Prominent local broadcast digital coverage including KGO San Francisco, KYW Philadelphia, KTVT Dallas, WUSA Washington, WBZ Boston, KIRO Seattle, KMOX St. Louis, WNCN Raleigh, WRAL Raleigh, and WSOC Charlotte.
 - COX station group, Sinclair Broadcasting, NBC’s national feeder service and FOX News’ national feeder service also distributed segments on FSIS safe food handling guidance to their affiliates.
- Spanish coverage on National and local TV outlets, many within the top ten DMAs, and digital sites including, National Telemundo PrimeraHora.com, EnSalud.com and UNIDOSUS blog,
- Pickup on digital sites which target millennials including Elite Daily, Teen Vogue, BroBible, Thrillist, and Hello Giggles.
- International coverage, including the Daily Mail in the U.K. and TV Asia
- Many news outlets, including NY Times, also shared the content via Twitter and Facebook.

Safe Food Handling Behavior Research (Annual Consumer Research)

The first observational study on consumer food safety behaviors was completed, analyzed and publicized. The results offer unique insights into consumer behavior that the agency would not have been aware of otherwise. Key insights include that 97 percent of consumer do not wash their hands adequately when they should, spice containers are frequently contaminated, and food safety educational materials FSIS developed (i.e. the video that was tested) are effective at improving consumer behavior by a statistically significant measure. Outreach about the findings of FSIS' first annual observational study achieved the following results:

- Total coverage achieved more than 11.6 million verifiable impressions.
- The media tour supporting this included 25 television interviews and 27 radio interviews.
- Tracking data found that the television interviews aired 331 times, across 216 stations in 133 markets and radio interviews aired on 2,656 affiliates.
- Information from the press release achieved at least 488 placements digitally and in print.
- The earned media value of this coverage was at least \$286,068 (Earned media values were found for only 11 placements).
- FSIS applied the insights from the research the following ways:
 - With the aforementioned media tour.
 - In social media generating hundreds of thousands of impressions.
 - During presentations to food safety experts at the International Association for Food Protection's 2018 conference in Salt Lake City, UT.
 - Updated fact sheets and new questions in the 'Ask Karen' system.
 - Subsequent outreach material for Back to School, Thanksgiving and Winter holidays.
 - Internal communications (*The Beacon* articles).
 - Updated 'consumer research' webpage on FSIS' website.

Public Awareness

During fiscal year 2018, FSIS saw major success in raising awareness of safe food handling guidance, recalls and information about foodborne illness. FSIS achieved more than 62 million weighted impressions from media outreach, web pageviews, social media engagements, educational material distribution, app downloads and direction conversations with individuals on the hotline and in the field. This is approximately 25 percent above the annual target for the year. Successful pitching during periods of seasonal food interest (e.g., Thanksgiving, Super Bowl, Fourth of July), and related to the observational study and policy issuances resulted in significant increases in media impressions, hotline calls and social media traffic this year.

Program Evaluations***Contractor Onboarding***

Completed in January 2018, the assessment collected qualitative data and produced process maps to identify current business process challenges and a map of the customer experience. The assessment makes several recommendations to enhance the process and its communication activities that the agency is currently implementing

Healthcare Provider Focus Groups/Data Collection

Completed in March 2018, FSIS assessed the current foodborne illness information for healthcare providers through focus groups, so that they can eventually better diagnose, manage, and educate patients affected with foodborne illness. The effort used an online platform to conduct 24 focus groups with 94 providers. National recruitment was conducted, and focus groups had urban, suburban, and rural representation, as well as representation across fields of practice and types of providers. The final report makes several recommendations to work with external organizations to enhance communication that the agency is currently considering.

Headquarters Decision Making Regarding Recall Evaluations

FSIS evaluated the recall process for consistency and to determine whether further process enhancements are needed to strengthen headquarters recall decision making processes. Generally, FSIS recall decision making processes are well defined and understood, decision making is highly consistent, and interviewees indicated that maintaining precedent and strong record keeping was important.

Evaluation of FSIS Policy Development, Clearance, and Implementation Process

FSIS assessed and documented the current process for developing and clearing directives and notices, in addition to hesitation points in the process, that can be improved upon to make the process more efficient and effective. The evaluation used several methods (interviews, focus groups, and paper surveys) to collect information to identify

areas of improvement for further consideration to improve the process as well as enhance understanding and implementation of these policies to ensure consistent implementation.

Surveys

FSIS completed several surveys during FY 2018 that assisted management in internal customer service and in program enhancement and accountability, including in support of evaluations and strategic plan measures. Specifically, FSIS completed the following: (Goals 1, 2, and 3)

- FSIS' third annual customer satisfaction survey on a range of topics including training, communications, human resources and benefits, information technology, and other areas, which inform Strategic Plan measures.
- Surveys to inform other Strategic Plan measures regarding coordination with State partners on foodborne outbreak, analysts' access to data and tools, consumer safety inspector gap assessment and public health veterinarian gap assessment to measure employees' skills related to CSI and PHV job duties, knowledge gained through training, and an outreach survey targeting small and very small establishment owners to inform development of the outreach platform.
- An eDevice survey targeting field inspectors to assess the efficiency in accessing FSIS applications and documents using a mobile device.
- Opinion and satisfaction surveys gathering information on new hire experiences, on the student employment program, on OM employee engagement through the annual OM employee advisory committee survey, and on the alternative dispute resolution program.

AGENCY-WIDE PERFORMANCE

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), a public health regulatory Agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is responsible for protecting the public's health by ensuring the safety of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. Legislative mandates provide FSIS with the authority to conduct its public health mission.

FSIS contributes to USDA Strategic Goal 7, Provide All Americans Access to a Safe, Nutritious, and Secure Food Supply and coincides with Objective 7.1, Prevent Foodborne Illness and Protect Public Health. The Agency aligned its 2017-2021 Strategic Plan to its Annual Plan framework, which directly influences how the Agency operates and allocates resources. Within those objectives, FSIS achieved the following results for the Departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for which the agency is responsible:

Table FSIS-15 KPI 1-Percentage of Establishments that Meet Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards

KPI	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2018 Target	2018 Result	2019 Target	2020 Target
Percent of Establishments that meet Performance Standards	77	71	68	Met	72	73
Percent of Establishments whose non-compliance rate decreases 120 days after receiving Early Warning Alert (EWA)	73	73	71	Met	73	74

KPI 1: Percentage of Establishments that Meet Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards

Focuses on using pathogen reduction performance standards to assess the food safety performance of establishments that slaughter and process poultry and meat products. It examines FSIS's influence on the behavior of establishments by verifying the effectiveness of establishments' food safety programs and process controls to increase the percent of establishments that meet pathogen reduction performance standards.

In FY 2018, the measure included the performance standards related to reducing *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in certain types of raw poultry products. However, in August 2018 FSIS changed the laboratory method it uses to test for *Campylobacter* in raw poultry products. Because the current *Campylobacter* performance standards will no longer apply, *Campylobacter* performance will not be incorporated into the measure until new performance standards for this pathogen are established and implemented based on the more sensitive enrichment method.

This measure is calculated by aggregating the total number of establishments by product meeting the *Salmonella* performance standards and dividing by the total number of establishments by product measured against the

standards. Products included are Young Chicken Carcasses, Young Turkey Carcasses, Comminuted Chicken, Comminuted Turkey, and Chicken Parts.

The measure is not cumulative. It is measured for the last month of the quarter or year. FSIS analyzes sample data for each 52-week moving window. This data is extracted from the agency's Public Health Information System (PHIS) about 10 days after the window is completed. The data extracted are for all pathogen/product pairs for which performance standards have been implemented. Additionally, the data has about 10 days' lag time from the end of a moving window to allow for completion of all microbial analysis before the data are extracted to generate the results for that window.

Selected Past Accomplishments Toward the Achievement of the KPI Outcomes

With this measure, FSIS continued its multipronged approach to combat these pathogens in FY 2018.

FSIS met its 68 percent target with 71 percent of establishments meeting *Salmonella* reduction performance standards.

FSIS is implementing a data-driven regulatory strategy to improve *Salmonella* control in raw poultry slaughter and processing establishments. In FY 2018, this strategy informed the development and issuance of two instructional notices to the field covering FSIS inspection program personnel follow-up sampling and the verification of establishment initiated corrective actions/reassessment activities for establishments that are not meeting the *Salmonella* performance standards. Additionally, FSIS implemented Category 2 and 3 PHIS weekly alerts in establishments producing carcasses, parts, or comminuted poultry parts.

In January 2018, FSIS began posting the category status for individual establishments producing raw chicken and turkey carcasses subject to a *Salmonella* performance standard. Additionally, FSIS posted the aggregate sampling results showing the number of establishments in categories 1, 2, or 3 for establishments producing young chicken or turkey carcasses, raw chicken parts or not ready-to-eat (NRTE) comminuted poultry products online.

FSIS also hosted two informational webinars: these two informational webinars described how categories are assigned to individual establishments subject to the *Salmonella* performance standards.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the 2020 Proposed Resource Level

FSIS will continue to implement a data-driven regulatory strategy to improve *Salmonella* control in raw poultry slaughter and processing establishments.

FSIS will continue to sample and analyze poultry products for *Campylobacter*, using a more sensitive method. When new *Campylobacter* performance standards are implemented, results may be re-incorporated into this strategic plan measure or reported in a new *Campylobacter*-specific measure.

FSIS will continue to use sampling data to inform FSIS policies, industry guidance and/or performance standards for regulated products.

KPI 2: Percentage of Establishments Whose Noncompliance Rate Decreases 120 After Receiving Early Warning Alert

Supports the modernization of inspection systems, policies, and the use of scientific approaches by focusing on the work inspectors do to address specific food safety concerns at establishments. It tracks the percentage of establishments that improve their performance (lower their rate of non-compliance) within 120 days of receiving a Public Health Regulation (PHR) Early Warning Alert (EWA). PHRs are a subset of regulations associated with higher non-compliance rates in establishments in the three months before a positive pathogen sampling result or enforcement action, than in establishments without pathogen-positives or enforcement actions. The USDA uses results of inspection tasks to calculate a PHR non-compliance rate for each regulated establishment and issues a PHR EWA when an establishment has a non-compliance rate that is elevated and is at or exceeds the Department's Non-compliance Cut Point for Early Warning.

Establishments receive alerts based on data currently recorded in PHIS. Evaluating an alert outside of the specified alert date will yield different results. Therefore, starting in February 2017, the USDA began taking a snapshot of alert data on the day of the monthly alert to maintain a consistent alert dataset.

Selected Past Accomplishments Toward the Achievement of the KPI Outcomes

With this measure, FSIS continued its multipronged approach to combat these pathogens in FY 2018.

FSIS met its 71 percent target with 73 percent of establishments decreasing their non-compliance rate after receiving an EWA.

FSIS implemented the FY 2018 Public Health Regulations, potential indicators of pathogen positive results or enforcement actions, used for the PHIS EWA and for Public Health Risk Evaluation (PHRE) prioritization.

FSIS also developed analytical tools and reports to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of EWA data in FY 2018. Using interactive data-driven graphics, the Department can continue to research individual establishment performance over time. These tools assist in identifying recidivist establishments that need further assistance or action and influence policy decisions to address specific food safety concerns and improve public health.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2020 Proposed Resource Level

The agency will continue to utilize the PHIS alert for Inspection Program Personnel (IPP) in poultry establishments whose performance declined from the previous category while providing a follow-up sampling performance alert summarizing recent performance to assist in trend analysis.

FSIS will continue to modernize inspection procedures and develop new approaches to assess the industry's control of hazards. Specifically, FSIS will continue to implement the New Poultry Inspection System in poultry establishments that opt in and are ready to adopt the new system. This inspection system is designed to facilitate pathogen reduction in poultry products by focusing the agency's online activities to provide for more efficient and effective carcass-by-carcass inspection, allowing some of the agency's online inspection resources to be used to perform additional offline inspection activities that are more effective in ensuring food safety.