

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Trader Notice MH 12/2015

To: USDA Approved Beef Plants

Subject: Requirement by USDA Approved Beef Plants to draft an SOP on Baseline Survey Sampling

Background

Access to the US market for beef intended for grinding requires Food Business Operators (FBOs) involved to carry out a Baseline Survey of carcass beef and beef intended for grinding with the following objectives:

- To assess and validate the sanitary dressing controls in slaughter plants under Irish conditions.
- To establish the prevalence of STEC in carcasses and cut meat processed at these plants

Carcass Swabbing

Over the course of the Baseline Survey each plant must sample 100 carcasses (both sides), i.e. 200 samples in total. Samples must be taken over a 4 to 5 week period, i.e. 20 – 25 carcasses (40 – 50 sides) per establishment *per week*.

The sampling protocol requires that the two sides of the same selected carcass are sampled at different stages in the dressing process: 8000cm³ of the leading side is to be sampled just after the hide-puller and 8000cm³ of the trailing side is to be sampled after evisceration but before chilling.

Carcasses are to be sampled for:

- STEC
- Aerobic Colony Count
- Enterobacteriaceae

Beef Intended for Grinding

Over the baseline survey period the FBO must also take 60 samples of meat (N = 60) intended for grinding from each day's deboning. The samples are to be taken randomly using an N=60 procedure as described in FSIS Guidelines.

Each N=60 sample of meat intended for grinding must be tested for:

- STEC
- Salmonella spp.

The FBO carcass swabs and meat samples are to be tested at a DAFM approved private laboratory.

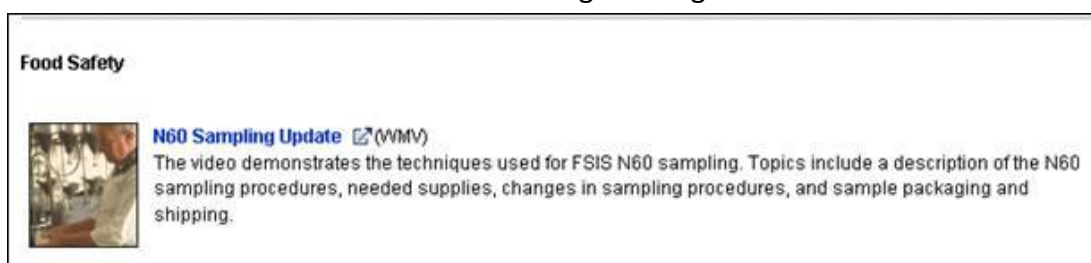
FBO Training

FBOs involved in the Baseline Survey of carcass beef and beef intended for grinding are required to train relevant staff in the methodology of sampling, sample identification, packaging and dispatch to laboratory.

To assist in this process, FBO staff should to view the following **videos**:

1. <http://youtu.be/SP0t9raTLCw> on carcass swabbing
Administrator permission to watch "Youtube" videos must be gained.
2. <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/mpi-videos> on N60 sampling of beef intended for grinding.

The video is half way down the page under the heading "Food Safety". It wont play on a certain PCs unless full administrators rights are granted.



This training must be supervised and signed off by the Veterinary Inspector at the plant.

SOP

Each FBO involved must draft an SOP on Baseline Survey sampling of carcasses and beef intended for grinding using the following FSIS documents as guidelines:

1. [FSIS Nationwide Beef and Veal Carcass Microbiological Baseline Data Collection Program](#) (carcass swabbing)
2. [FSIS Compliance Guideline for Establishments Sampling Beef Trimmings for Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia coli \(STEC\) Organisms or Virulence Markers](#) (sampling of meat intended for grinding).

The SOP must describe in detail the FBO's proposed procedures for the Baseline Survey sampling of carcasses and meat intended for grinding. The SOP should cover the sampling procedures, packaging and storage of samples, dispatch to laboratory, request to test for **STEC** and other microorganisms listed above, control of sampled carcasses and lots of cut meat, communication of results to DAFM and FBO simultaneously and procedures to be adopted in the case of a positive result.

Each draft SOP is to be forwarded by e-mail to Meat Hygiene Division at:
audreym.lyons@agriculture.gov.ie

Audrey Lyons

Meat Hygiene Division

3rd July 2015