

FSIS BACKGROUNDER

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Proposed Reorganization on the Food Safety and Inspection Service

Highlights of the Proposal

FSIS must change its organizational structure to make the best possible use of its resources so that it can meet the food safety and consumer protection challenges of the future. The change will position the Agency to implement the inspection program of the future.

Proposal would maintain a frontline workforce capable of providing rigorous science-based regulatory oversight. The streamlining of the management would assure that the maximum resources can be applied to priority food safety activities such as increased microbial sampling, storage, and retail stages of the food system.

Proposal would streamline current headquarters structure significantly:

- reduce number of major organizational segments from 13 to 7.
- eliminate one layer of management at headquarters (Associate Administrators).
- reduce number of supervisory positions.
- reduce number of headquarters and field non-front line positions by 20%.

Proposal would unify and streamline field management structure:

- unify current four separate field structures into one structure to carry out all domestic and international meat, poultry and egg product inspection and compliance activities.
- streamline current 46 field management offices, staffed by 470 employees at a cost of \$27 million to 18 district offices, staffed by 240 employees at a cost of \$16 million, one centralized technical services center, and two centralized administrative centers. The difference would be used to fund the functions which would move to the technical services center and the administrative centers, fund the cost of implementing the reorganization, and carry out the Agency's commitment to further streamline its support structure.
- eliminate one of three existing inspection supervisory/management layers in the field by collapsing the 5 regional offices and 26 area offices into the 18 district offices.

Benefits

- Streamlining of management would permit further focusing resources on frontline activities.
- Unified field management structure would improve ability to marshal and flexibly manage resources to carry out inspection and compliance activities.
- New headquarters structure would provide new focus, leadership and scientific expertise in addressing the most important public health risks related to meat, poultry and egg products.
- New headquarters structure would centralize management of all policy, rulemaking, and program development activities to better lead and evaluate program changes.
- Consolidation of administrative functions would increase efficiency and improve effectiveness

Impact on Employees

The proposed reorganization requires approval by USDA before FSIS can begin implementation. The approval process is expected to take several months, and full implementation is expected to be completed within 2 years following approval.

The proposal would not affect staffing levels or the work locations of employees at the in-plant level.

The current 46 field management offices are staffed by 470 employees. Under the proposed reorganization the jobs of 240 of these employees will be transferred to the district offices. Approximately 40 jobs will be transferred to the technical services center, and approximately 90 jobs will be transferred to centralized administrative offices located in Minneapolis and Des Moines. For those employees who work in offices that may be closed or reduced in size, the Agency will do everything it can, within legal and budgetary constraints, to find other opportunities in FSIS. Job placement assistance will be provided to employees whose jobs are abolished as a result of the reorganization. The Agency is not currently considering any involuntary separation actions.