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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Food Safety and Inspection Service**

[Docket No. 98-004N]

Ground Beef Processing Guidance Material**AGENCY:** Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Availability of material and public meeting notice.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announces that it is making available for public comment a guidance document intended to assist processors of ground beef, especially small processors, in developing procedures to minimize the risk of *E. coli* 0157:H7 and other pathogens in ground beef products produced in their establishments. FSIS plans to hold a public meeting to discuss this document on April 22, 1998. FSIS is aware that other organizations also are developing guidance materials for the production of ground beef and encourages their presentation and discussion at the public meeting. These presentations will be scheduled, and appropriate time will be allotted. FSIS will make available any such materials submitted to the Agency prior to the meeting. FSIS

is open to the idea of a collaboratively produced guidance document should that prove useful and practicable. In addition to discussing the draft guidance documents, FSIS also would be interested in comments on how best to ensure that the guidance materials that result from this process receive the broadest possible distribution.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 19, 1998. The meeting will be held on April 22, 1998, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: An electronic version of the FSIS guidance document is available online at FSIS' homepage at <http://www.usda.gov/fsis>. Guidance materials made available to FSIS prior to the meeting also will be available at this address. Hard copies of the FSIS document are available from the FSIS Docket Clerk in the FSIS Docket Room, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The public meeting will be held at the Arlington Hilton and Towers, 950 North Stafford Street, Arlington, VA; telephone (703) 528-6000. The hotel is located next to the Ballston Metro station. To register for the meeting, contact Ms. Mary Gioglio at (202) 501-7244 or 501-7136 or FAX to 501-7642. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify Ms. Gioglio by April 15, 1998.

COMMENTS: Send comments on the FSIS guidance document to FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket No. 98-004N, at the above address. Comments will be available for public inspection in the FSIS Docket Room during the above-stated hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. William J. Hudnall, Assistant Deputy Administrator, Office of Policy, Program Development, and Evaluation, at (202) 205-0495.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As a result of recent product recalls involving *E. coli* 0157:H7, FSIS has prepared guidance material to help beef grinding operations minimize the risk of, and potential effects associated with, *E. coli* 0157:H7 and other microbial pathogens in raw ground beef and other raw products. This material should prove particularly useful to small establishments developing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans during the next 2 years.

The guidance material includes recommendations for receiving raw product; storing raw product; the grinding process, including rework and risk-based product separation; packaging, cooling, and storage; shipping, handling, and distribution;

recordkeeping; and food safety education. FSIS also solicits comments on how best to ensure that the guidance materials that result from this process receive as broad distribution as possible.

Done at Washington, DC, on March 12, 1998.

Thomas J. Billy,
Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, Northern, Intermountain, and Pacific Northwest Regions

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ID918-1610-00-UCRB]

Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah and Nevada

AGENCIES: Forest Service, USDA; Bureau of Land Management, USDI.

ACTION: Notice of extension of comment period for draft environmental impact statements (EISs).

SUMMARY: On June 12, 1997, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management published a notice of availability of two draft EISs in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 320786). That notice stated that a 120-day comment period was provided for the Eastside Draft EIS and for the Upper Columbia River Basin Draft EIS. On September 5, 1997, a second notice (62 FR 46941) extended the comment period to February 6, 1998. On January 23, 1998, a third notice (6 FR 3533) extended the comment period to April 6, 1998. This notice is to inform interested parties that the comment period has been extended again to provide additional time for public review of, and comment on, an economic and social report prepared in response to a requirement of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1998.

DATES: Comments on the two draft EISs and on the economic and social report must now be submitted or postmarked no later than May 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the economic and social report were mailed the second week of March to everyone on the mailing list for the Eastside and Upper

Columbia River Basin Draft EISs. Interested parties not on the mailing list can obtain a copy from ICBEMP, 112 E. Poplar Street, Walla Walla, WA 99362 or by calling (509) 522-4030 or from ICBEMP, 304 N. 8th Street, Room 250, Boise ID 83702 or by calling (208) 334-1770, ext. 120. The economic and social report will also be available via the internet (<http://www.icbemp.gov>).

Comments on the Eastside draft EIS, including the economic and social report, should be submitted in writing to ICBEMP, 112 East Poplar Street, P.O. Box 2076, Walla Walla, WA 99362. Comments on the Upper Columbia River Basin draft EIS, including the economic and social report, should be submitted in writing to ICBEMP, 304 N. 8th Street, Room 250, Boise, ID 83702. If your comments are in regard to both draft EISs, they may be sent to either office. Comments may also be made electronically by accessing the Project home page (<http://www.icbemp.gov>), where a comment form is available. If you have already submitted your comments, you may now submit more comments on the draft EIS, including your comments regarding the economic and social report.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: EIS Team Leader Jeff Walter, 304 N. 8th Street, Room 250, Boise, ID 83702, telephone (208) 334-1770 or EIS Deputy Team Leader Cathy Humphrey, 112 East Poplar Street, P.O. Box 2076, Walla Walla, WA 99362, telephone (509) 522-4030.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In Section 323 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1998 Pub. L. 105-83), the United States Congress directed the following: "Using all research information available from the area encompassed by the Project, the Secretaries [of Agriculture and the Interior], to the extent practicable, shall analyze the economic and social conditions, and culture and customs, of the communities at the sub-basin level within the Project area and the impacts the alternatives in the draft EISs will have on those communities. This analysis shall be published on a schedule that will allow a reasonable period of time for public comment thereon prior to the close of the comment periods on the draft EIS. The analysis, together with the response * * * to the public comment, shall be incorporated in the final EISs and * * * subsequent decisions related thereto."

The required analysis has been prepared. It is a report on the existing economic and social conditions at the community level within the Interior