SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is withdrawing the part of a direct final rule that added a Salmonella performance standard for fresh pork sausages to the Federal meat inspection regulations. FSIS is withdrawing this regulatory amendment because it received an adverse written comment within the scope of the rulemaking in response to the direct final rule. Elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register, FSIS has published a proposed rule for the performance standard.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 12, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit an original and two copies of written comments to: FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #97–080W, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20250–3700. Reference materials cited in this docket will be available for public inspection in the FSIS Docket Room from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Patricia Stolfa, Assistant Deputy Administrator, Office of Policy, Program Development and Evaluation, (202) 205–0699.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In a direct final rule published in the Federal Register on November 14, 1997 (62 FR 61007) FSIS, among other things, notified the public of its intent to establish a Salmonella performance standard for fresh pork sausages (9 CFR 310.25(b)(1)). FSIS solicited comments concerning the direct final rule for a 30-day period ending December 15, 1997. FSIS stated that the effective date of the proposed amendment would be 60 days after publication of the direct final rule in the Federal Register, unless the Agency received adverse written comments or a notice of intent to submit adverse comments within the scope of the rulemaking by the close of the comment period. FSIS also stated that if it received such comments, it would publish a notice in the Federal Register withdrawing the direct final rule before the scheduled effective date and would publish a proposed rule for public comment.

FSIS received adverse comments within the scope of the rulemaking from the law firm of McDermott, Will & Emery representing Jimmy Dean Foods, Inc. and Odom’s Tennessee Pride Sausage, Inc. Therefore, FSIS is withdrawing the 9 CFR 310.25(b)(1) Salmonella performance standard regulatory amendment and is issuing a proposed rule elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. There were no adverse comments received regarding the other provisions of the direct final rule. Therefore, the following provisions will become effective on January 13, 1997: (1) The amendment to 9 CFR § 381.94 allowing poultry samples to be taken from the end of the slaughter line if collecting samples from the end of the chilling process is impracticable; (2) the amendment to 9 CFR § 381.94 allowing turkeys to be sampled by sponging the carcass on the back and thigh; and (3) the technical correction to 9 CFR § 417.2 to reference the Poultry Products Inspection Act.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, the amendment revising table 2 in § 310.25(b)(1), published at 62 FR 61008 (November 14, 1997), is withdrawn.