



**Food Safety and Inspection Service  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250-3700**

## **News and Information**

Congressional and Public Affairs  
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### **FSIS PROVIDES BUSINESS-FRIENDLY INTERNET SUPPORT FOR MEAT AND POULTRY LABEL APPROVAL**

WASHINGTON, April 13, 2000 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service is introducing a new, business-friendly website providing detailed labeling information to meat and poultry plants.

"FSIS wants to make accessibility a key component of its labeling program, particularly for small and very small meat and poultry plants," said Caren Wilcox, deputy under secretary for food safety. "The site provides essential information on labeling standards, policies, and procedures, including a special section that captures the small business issues."

FSIS strives to ensure that small and very small meat and poultry processors are not at a disadvantage in accessing labeling requirements and gaining label approvals. The website has all of the information needed to help small food processors with technical and procedural labeling concerns, including the name of the Agency staff liaison charged with facilitating resolution of small business issues on a one-on-one basis. The website address is: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oppde/larc>.

In July, 1996, FSIS simplified labeling procedures by eliminating prior approval for many meat, poultry, and egg products labels. For more complex labels that still require prior approval, such as those making claims, a first-come, first-serve label approval process was implemented in September 1999. This more efficient approach allows labels to be submitted for review and approval by mail; expedited mail; fax; delivery services; company and trade representatives; courier services; and label expeditors. Submissions are reviewed in the order they are received. Scheduled meetings with FSIS personnel are available on any issues relating to labeling, standards, and ingredients.

FSIS is moving towards making even more information accessible on the website. In the near future, more links will be added and a "Labeling 101" presentation will be available to download and use.

In the future, all labeling policy and procedure documents will be put onto this website or linked to it.

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NOTE: Access news releases and other information at the FSIS Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>

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