



July 16, 2012

Beyond the Border Action Plan Pre-clearance Initiative Pilot Project on Import Re-inspection Activities for Fresh Meat

As part of the Beyond the Border Action Plan, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is working jointly with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to implement a pre-clearance initiative. This initiative consists of a pilot project that will consider alternative methods for reviewing import documents prior to the shipments arrival at the U.S. border and alternative methods for release of shipments that are destined for further processing at an FSIS official establishment. Throughout the operation of this pilot, both agencies are committed to maintaining at least the same level of food safety as is currently realized.

After completion of the planning stage of the pilot, it will begin operating in September 2012 for one year. It will start with a narrow scope; consisting of a small number of CFIA-registered establishments, which may vary in size, that export fresh meat (beef and pork) products directly to FSIS-inspected establishments for further processing. Considerations for future pre-clearance processes for meat will be based on analysis of the results of this pilot after its conclusion in September 2013.

The criteria for establishments to be eligible to participate in the pilot project are:

- Conduct regular business across the U.S.-Canada border.
- Consistent compliance history that demonstrates sound food safety and system controls.
- No public health violations reported by FSIS at the port-of-entry (POE). CFIA-registered establishments that have public health related (i.e., microbiological or chemical residue) POE violations since the start of 2010, will not be eligible for inclusion.
- Ability to demonstrate control of the flow of product when necessary, as reflected in a clean compliance rate for presenting product to FSIS (i.e., no FSIS-documented failure to present).

FSIS and CFIA are currently reviewing data collected since 2010, to begin identifying CFIA-registered establishments that meet the pilot criteria and can be considered eligible for this pilot.

Shipments of product from establishments that participate in the pilot project, and are not pre-assigned to be sampled at the import establishment, are cleared to continue to their destination establishment where physical examination of the shipment may occur, if selected. This physical examination includes zero tolerance checks for fecal material and ingesta. Shipments of product from participating establishments may be required to stop at the official import inspection facility where samples are collected. Because the documentation associated with the shipment would already be reviewed (i.e., pre-cleared), the intact shipment would move to the destined processing establishment after the samples are collected, while they are analyzed. Pending the receipt of a non-violative result, the shipment remains under the control of the importer until the sample results are received. The current import re-inspection process will not change for CFIA-registered establishments not participating in the pilot program.

The pilot's performance will be measured against the level of food safety that is currently realized.

Email your comments to:

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- CFIAPROGRAMS-ACIAPROGRAMMES@inspection.gc.ca

General information on this initiative:

On February 4, 2011, President Obama and Prime Minister Harper announced the U.S.-Canada joint declaration, *Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness*. It articulates a shared vision where both our countries work together to address threats at the earliest point possible, while facilitating the legitimate movement of people, goods, and services into our countries and across our shared border.

The Beyond the Border Action Plan consists of 32 separate initiatives. It calls for enhancements to programs that help trusted businesses and travelers move efficiently across the border; introduces new measures to facilitate movement and trade across the border while reducing the administrative burden for business; and invests in improvements to our shared border infrastructure and technology. By expediting lawful trade and commerce into and across our shared border, the United States and Canada seek to enhance our economic competitiveness, create jobs and support economic growth.

Further information on this initiative can be found at the following web links:

For information on the Beyond the Border Action Plan from the White House:

- <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/12/07/fact-sheet-us-canada-beyond-border-and-regulatory-cooperation-council-in>
- http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/us-canada_btb_action_plan3.pdf

For information on the Beyond the Border Action Plan initiative from the Department of Homeland Security:

- <http://www.dhs.gov/files/publications/beyond-the-border.shtm>
- <http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/fact-sheets/20111207-btb-pre-inspection-pre-clearance.shtm>

For more information on the Beyond the Border Action Plan initiatives under Canada's Economic Action Plan:

- <http://actionplan.gc.ca/eng/feature.asp?pagelId=357&featureId=30>
- <http://actionplan.gc.ca/eng/feature.asp?pagelId=337>