

### Ensuring Impartiality of Attorneys Hired as Non-Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Adjudicators

22. Agencies' guidelines and procedures for hiring attorneys who will act as non-ALJ adjudicators should be designed and administered to ensure that those hired will act impartially and maintain the appearance of impartiality, as suggested in Recommendation 2018-4, *Recusal Rules for Administrative Adjudicators*.

[FR Doc. 2019-27930 Filed 12-26-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6110-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2019-0066]

#### Addition of Burma (Myanmar) to the List of Regions Affected With African Swine Fever

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** We are advising the public that we have added Burma (Myanmar) to the list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service considers to be affected with African swine fever (ASF). We have taken this action because of confirmation of ASF in Burma (Myanmar).

**DATES:** Burma (Myanmar) was added to the APHIS list of regions considered affected with ASF on August 19, 2019.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Ingrid Kotowski, Regionalization Evaluation Services, Veterinary Services, APHIS, 920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200, Raleigh, NC 27606; Phone: (919) 855-7732; email: [Ingrid.kotowski@usda.gov](mailto:Ingrid.kotowski@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of specified animals and animal products to prevent the introduction into the United States of various animal diseases, including African swine fever (ASF). ASF is a highly contagious disease of wild and domestic swine that can spread rapidly in swine populations with extremely high rates of morbidity and mortality. A list of regions where ASF exists or is reasonably believed to exist is maintained on the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions/>. This list is referenced in § 94.8(a)(2) of the regulations.

Section 94.8(a)(3) of the regulations states that APHIS will add a region to the list referenced in § 94.8(a)(2) upon determining ASF exists in the region, based on reports APHIS receives of outbreaks of the disease from veterinary officials of the exporting country, from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), or from other sources the Administrator determines to be reliable, or upon determining that there is reason to believe the disease exists in the region. Section 94.8(a)(1) of the regulations specifies the criteria on which the Administrator bases the reason to believe ASF exists in a region. Section 94.8(b) prohibits the importation of pork and pork products from regions listed in accordance with § 94.8 except if processed and treated in accordance with the provisions specified in that section or consigned to an APHIS-approved establishment for further processing. Section 96.2 restricts the importation of swine casings that originated in or were processed in a region where ASF exists, as listed under § 94.8(a).

On August 14, 2019, the veterinary authorities of Burma (Myanmar) reported to the OIE the occurrence of ASF in that country. Therefore, in response to this outbreak, on August 19, 2019, APHIS added Burma (Myanmar) to the list of regions where ASF exists or is reasonably believed to exist. This notice serves as an official record and public notifications of that action.

As a result, pork and pork products from Burma (Myanmar), including casings, are subject to APHIS import restrictions designed to mitigate the risk of ASF introduction into the United States.

Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*), the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs designated this action as not a major rule, as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1633, 7701-7772, 7781-7786, and 8301-8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 20th day of December 2019.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 2019-27910 Filed 12-26-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2019-0065]

#### Addition of Serbia to the List of Regions Affected With African Swine Fever

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** We are advising the public that we have added Serbia to the list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service considers to be affected with African swine fever (ASF). We have taken this action because of confirmation of ASF in Serbia.

**DATES:** Serbia was added to the APHIS list of regions considered affected with ASF on August 14, 2019.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Ingrid Kotowski, Regionalization Evaluation Services, Veterinary Services, APHIS, 920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200, Raleigh, NC 27606; Phone: (919) 855-7732; email: [Ingrid.kotowski@usda.gov](mailto:Ingrid.kotowski@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of specified animals and animal products to prevent the introduction into the United States of various animal diseases, including African swine fever (ASF). ASF is a highly contagious disease of wild and domestic swine that can spread rapidly in swine populations with extremely high rates of morbidity and mortality. A list of regions where ASF exists or is reasonably believed to exist is maintained on the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions/>. This list is referenced in § 94.8(a)(2) of the regulations.

Section 94.8(a)(3) of the regulations states that APHIS will add a region to the list referenced in § 94.8(a)(2) upon determining ASF exists in the region, based on reports APHIS receives of outbreaks of the disease from veterinary officials of the exporting country, from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), or from other sources the Administrator determines to be reliable, or upon determining that there is reason to believe the disease exists in the region. Section 94.8(a)(1) of the regulations specifies the criteria on

which the Administrator bases the reason to believe ASF exists in a region. Section 94.8(b) prohibits the importation of pork and pork products from regions listed in accordance with § 94.8 except if processed and treated in accordance with the provisions specified in that section or consigned to an APHIS-approved establishment for further processing. Section 96.2 restricts the importation of swine casings that originated in or were processed in a region where ASF exists, as listed under § 94.8(a).

On August 13, 2019, the veterinary authorities of Serbia reported to the OIE the occurrence of ASF in that country. Therefore, in response to this outbreak, on August 14, 2019, APHIS added Serbia to the list of regions where ASF exists or is reasonably believed to exist. This notice serves as an official record and public notification of that action.

As a result, pork and pork products from Serbia, including casings, are subject to APHIS import restrictions designed to mitigate the risk of ASF introduction into the United States.

Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*), the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs designated this action as not a major rule, as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1633, 7701–7772, 7781–7786, and 8301–8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 20th day of December 2019.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 2019–27908 Filed 12–26–19; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. FSIS–2016–0021]

#### Food Safety and Inspection Service Labeling Guideline on Documentation Needed To Substantiate Animal Raising Claims for Label Submission

**AGENCY:** Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and response to comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is announcing the availability of an updated version of its guideline on documentation needed to support animal-raising claims made on meat or poultry product labeling. Official establishments submit this documentation to the Agency when they

apply for approval of labels with animal raising claims. The updated guideline includes changes made in response to comments on the guideline posted in October 2016. This **Federal Register** notice also summarizes and responds to issues raised in petitions submitted to the Agency by animal welfare advocacy organizations.

**DATES:** Submit comments on or before February 25, 2020.

**ADDRESSES:** A downloadable version of the compliance guideline is available to view and print at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Compliance\\_Guides\\_Index/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Compliance_Guides_Index/index.asp). No hard copies of the compliance guideline have been published.

FSIS invites interested persons to submit comments relevant to clarification provided in this notice on the label claim “free range” for poultry products. Only comments addressing this specific issue will be considered at this time. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** This website provides commenters the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on the web page or to attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions at that site for submitting comments.

- **Mail, including CD-ROMs, etc.:** Send to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Room 6065, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

- **Hand- or courier-delivered submittals:** Deliver to 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 6065, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

**Instructions:** All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name and docket number FSIS–2016–0021. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to <http://www.regulations.gov>.

**Docket:** For access to background documents or comments received, call (202) 720–5627 to schedule a time to visit the FSIS Docket Room at 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 6065, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Terri Nintemann, Assistant Administrator, Office of Policy and Program Development by telephone at (202) 205–0495.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

## Background

Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601–695, at 601(n), 607; 21 U.S.C. 451–470, at 453(h), 457) (the Acts), FSIS develops and implements regulations to require that the labels of meat and poultry products are truthful and not misleading. Under the Acts, the Secretary of Agriculture, who has delegated this authority to FSIS, must approve the labels of meat and poultry products before the products can enter commerce (21 U.S.C. 601(d); 21 U.S.C. 457(c)).<sup>1</sup>

FSIS allows certain labels that bear only mandatory labeling features and that comply with the Agency’s labeling regulations to be generically approved (9 CFR 412.2(a)(1)). Generically approved labels do not need to be submitted to FSIS for approval before they can be used on product in commerce. However, a label with a special statement or claim (9 CFR 412.1(c)(3) and 412.1(e)), including an animal-raising claim, must be submitted to FSIS for approval before it may be used on a product distributed in commerce. A label bearing an animal-raising claim must be submitted to the Office of Policy and Program Development, Labeling and Program Delivery Staff (LPDS), in FSIS, with necessary documentation to support the special statement or claim. Examples of animal-raising claims include but are not limited to: “Vegetarian-fed,” “Grass-fed,” and “Raised without the use of antibiotics.”

On October 5, 2016, FSIS announced the availability of and requested comments on its *Labeling Guideline on Documentation Needed to Substantiate Animal Raising Claims for Label Submission* (81 FR 68993). FSIS published the guideline to advise establishments of the type of documentation that they should submit in support of animal-raising claims on meat or poultry product labels. FSIS needs this documentation to determine whether these claims are truthful and not misleading.

After reviewing the comments received, the Agency has revised the guideline. A summarized list of major changes to the guideline follows. The revised guideline is posted at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/compliance-guides-index>. The information in this guideline is provided as guidance to assist meat and poultry establishments and is not legally

<sup>1</sup> FSIS has similar authority over egg products under the Egg Products Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. 1036(b).