



United States Department of Agriculture

RETAIL GRINDING RECORD KEEPING RULE

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), issued grinding record keeping requirements (80 FR 79231) in 2015. These requirements apply to meat and poultry processing establishments and retailers, such as yours, that grind raw beef products for sale in commerce. FSIS is responsible for ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat and poultry is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged. FSIS' authority comes from the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA).¹ Under the authority of the FMIA, FSIS inspects all meat products sold in interstate commerce and reinspects imported products, ensuring that they meet U.S. food safety standards, in addition to investigating foodborne illnesses associated with meat products. FSIS investigators and other federal health partners use records at all levels of the distribution chain, including those records maintained at retail stores, to identify the sources of foodborne illness outbreaks.

The Final Rule (80 FR 79231) specifically requires retail stores to maintain records that fully disclose:

- (A) The establishment numbers of the establishments supplying the materials used to prepare each lot of raw ground beef product.
- (B) All supplier lot numbers and production dates.
- (C) The names of the supplied materials, including beef components and any materials carried over from one production lot to the next.
- (D) The date and time each lot of raw ground beef product is produced; and
- (E) The date and time when grinding equipment and other related food-contact surfaces are cleaned and sanitized.

The records must be kept at the location where the beef is ground. Such records are required to be maintained for a period of one year after the recorded date of the grinding activity.

Your compliance with these regulations is necessary for FSIS to accurately trace the source of foodborne illness outbreaks involving ground beef and identify the source materials that may need to be recalled. We hope that your awareness of these requirements within this notice and the information agency officials have shared with you during their recent visit will assist you in complying with the requirements in the future. Please be aware that failure to comply with regulatory requirements may result in the issuance of formal warning notices or other enforcement action.

¹While retail stores and restaurants or similar retail-type establishments are exempt from most requirements of federal inspection, certain provisions of the FMIA and federal regulations still apply. For example, meat product(s) prepared by a retail store are required to be derived from animals slaughtered under either state or federal inspection. Additionally, although not subject to daily inspection by FSIS, your business is required to maintain sanitary conditions and ensure that meat products at your store are not adulterated or misbranded. FSIS has the authority under the FMA, 21 U.S.C. 672, to detain product should it be found to be adulterated or misbranded. For a complete description of the regulations regarding the retail exemption, see FMIA, 21 U.S.C. 624 and 661, and 9 CFR 303.1(d)(1).