

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

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# FSIS NOTICE

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37-21

9/22/21

## ENDING MANDATORY INSPECTION FOR CERTAIN MULTI-COMPONENT KIT PRODUCTS CONTAINING MEAT OR POULTRY PRODUCTS

### I. PURPOSE

On September 21, 2021, FSIS published the Federal Register notice, *Availability of Kit Product Labeling Guideline*, ([86 FR 52439](#)) that announced the availability of the updated *FSIS Guideline on Kit Products* and explained that FSIS will no longer conduct mandatory inspection services for multi-component kit products that contain fully labeled meat or poultry products. This notice instructs inspection program personnel (IPP) to discuss the notice with firms currently receiving mandatory inspection for kit products and explain the procedures for ending mandatory inspection and the option to seek voluntary inspection.

**NOTE:** There are many varieties of food kit products that contain meat or poultry products, including, but not limited to: wraps, pizza, stew, salads, fajitas, stroganoff, and stir-fry skillet meals. These items are commonly sold as fully cooked, but some may require cooking. Generally, the meat and poultry components are separately wrapped and already inspected and fully labeled before assembly with various food components in the same packaging.

### II. BACKGROUND

A. In July 2019, FSIS published and requested comment on a guideline for establishments producing multi-component kit products that contain fully labeled meat or poultry components. On September 21, 2021, FSIS announced updates to the guideline and responded to comments received. FSIS developed the guideline for establishments to provide information on the labeling and inspection of multi-component food kit products that contain a meat or poultry component that is fully labeled. As announced in the 2019 guideline, FSIS determined that the act of assembling a food kit product whose label refers to meat or poultry in its name does not need to be done under FSIS inspection, if conditions explained within the guideline are met.

B. The Agency revised the guideline to:

1. Announce that FSIS will no longer provide mandatory inspection services for the assembly of kits that meet certain conditions as described in this guideline and clarify that such kits are eligible for FSIS voluntary inspection;
2. Clarify that the guideline does not apply to products produced under the retail exemption;
3. Clarify that kits labeled as a standardized product must meet the regulatory standard when prepared; and

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4. Clarify that uninspected kits placed into shipping containers are not to bear the USDA legend on the shipping container.

### III. INSPECTION PROGRAM PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Upon receipt of this notice and at the next weekly meeting, IPP are to inform establishment management that if they are currently producing multi-component kit products that contain fully labeled meat or poultry components whose label refers to the meat or poultry component in its name, the act of assembling the products does not require FSIS inspection, if conditions explained within the guideline are met. IPP are to inform the establishment of the conditions in the guideline:

1. The meat or poultry component is prepared and separately packaged under FSIS inspection and labeled with all required features, including:
  - a. Product Name;
  - b. Handling statement (e.g., Keep Refrigerated), if product is perishable;
  - c. USDA legend and establishment number of the official establishment that packaged and labeled the meat or poultry component;
  - d. Name and address of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor;
  - e. Ingredients statement (if composed of more than one ingredient); and
  - f. Safe handling instructions if the meat or poultry components is not ready-to-eat;
2. The outer kit label clearly identifies all the individual components in the kit; and
3. The outer kit label clearly identifies the product as a single unit or "kit" such as "Chicken Barbecue Dinner Kit" or "Beef Lasagna Meal."

B. IPP also are to inform establishment management that if they are currently receiving mandatory inspection of kit products that do not require mandatory FSIS inspection, they are to contact their District Office if they would like to receive FSIS voluntary inspection services for the production of kit products.

### IV. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to your supervisor or as needed to the Office of Policy and Program Development through [askFSIS](#) or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935. When submitting a question, complete the [web form](#) and select General Inspection Policy as the Inquiry Type.

**NOTE:** Refer to [FSIS Directive 5620.1](#), *Using askFSIS*, for additional information on submitting questions.



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