



**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND CONSUMER SERVICES  
MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION DIVISION  
Raleigh, North Carolina**

*Steve Troxler, Commissioner*

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| <b>MPID NOTICE</b> | <b>16-24</b> | <b>11-15-2024</b> |
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***Salmonella* Performance Standards and Categorization for State Establishments Enrolled  
in a MPID Poultry Sampling Project**

**I. PURPOSE:**

This document provides instructions to the MPID Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) for providing *Salmonella* categorization notification to MPID field staff and on MPID field staff actions when notified of a State-inspected establishment's *Salmonella* categorization result. This document also provides a reference for MPID Enforcement Investigative Analysis Officers (EIAOs) on items to verify during a Public Health Risk Evaluation (PHRE) or Food Safety Assessment (FSA), whether regularly scheduled or For-Cause, in establishments receiving and further processing raw poultry products.

**II. CANCELLATION:**

None

**III. REFERENCES:**

FSIS Directive 10,250.2 Performance Standards: *Salmonella* Verification Program for Raw Poultry Products; 81 FR 7285; 83 FR 56046

**IV. BACKGROUND**

As part of the "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Systems Final Rule", FSIS established performance standards for certain poultry products in 1996. Since then, these standards continue to be updated. In 2024, a State-inspected establishment met the criteria for sampling raw poultry products for *Salmonella* Performance Standards necessitating the development and distribution of this MPID Notice.

**V. PERFORMANCE CATEGORIZATION**

- A. For poultry products produced by State-inspected plants and subsequently sampled for *Salmonella*, MPID will assess if the pathogen reduction standards as set by FSIS are met as shown in **Table 1**:

**Table 1.** *Salmonella* Poultry Performance Standards announced in a 2016 Federal Register Notice (81 FR 7285)

| Product            | Performance Standard* | Maximum Acceptable Percent Positive | Minimum Number of Samples to Assess Process Control** |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Comminuted Chicken | 13 of 52              | 25%                                 | 10                                                    |
| Comminuted Turkey  | 7 of 52               | 13.5%                               | 10                                                    |
| Chicken Parts      | 8 of 52               | 15.4%                               | 10                                                    |

\*The performance standard is represented as a fraction of maximum allowable positives over the target number of samples collected and analyzed in a 52-week window.

\*\*FSIS must analyze at least this number of samples in a single 52-week window in order to categorize an establishment for the standard listed.

B. *Salmonella* performance standard category determinations will be based on a minimum number of *Salmonella* sample results being available from a 52-week moving window (defined as 52 consecutive Sunday-Saturday weeks). As per Federal Register Notice 83 FR 56046, the category definitions are as follows:

1. **Category 1:** Establishments that have achieved 50 percent or less of the maximum allowable percent positive during the most recently completed 52-week moving window.
2. **Category 2:** Establishments that meet the maximum allowable percent positive but have results greater than 50 percent of the maximum allowable percent positive during the most recently completed 52-week moving window.
3. **Category 3:** Establishments that have exceeded the maximum allowable percent positive during the most recently completed 52-week moving window.

## VI. NOTIFICATION OF *SALMONELLA* CATEGORIZATION

A. The first *Salmonella* categorization notification from the TAU to the field will occur after 10 samples have been collected, subsequently analyzed, and results obtained from the ASC Microbiology Laboratory as shown in **Table 1** above.

B. When an establishment is assigned to Category 1:

1. MPID Personnel (In-Plant Personnel (IPP), Area Supervisor, TA Coordinators, Technical Assistance Manager, and Director) will receive an alert via email entitled "Category 1 Alert – Product Meets the Performance Standard."
2. IPP notifies the establishment in the next weekly meeting and documents that notification in PHIS in the weekly meeting MOI.
3. No further actions would need to be taken at this time by the IPP or the establishment.

C. When an establishment is assigned to Category 2:

1. MPID Personnel (IPP, Area Supervisor, T/A Coordinators, Technical Assistance Manager, and Director) will receive an alert via email entitled "Category 2 Alert – Product Exceeded One Half of the Performance Standard."
2. IPP notifies the establishment in the next weekly meeting and documents that notification in PHIS in the weekly meeting MOI.

**NOTE:** In the subject line of the weekly meeting MOI, the inspector is to include "Weekly Meeting/Product Exceeded One Half of the Performance Standard" as the title.

- a. During this meeting, the inspector is to inform establishment management that the Category 2 assessment indicates inconsistent control of *Salmonella* and if this trend continues, they may fail the performance standard.
3. No further actions would need to be taken at this time by the IPP or the establishment.

D. When an establishment is assigned to Category 3:

1. MPID Personnel (IPP, Area Supervisor, TA Coordinators, Technical Assistance Manager, and Director) will receive an alert via email entitled "Category 3 Alert – Failure to Meet a Performance Standard."
2. IPP notifies the establishment in the next weekly meeting and documents that notification in PHIS in the weekly meeting MOI.

**NOTE:** In the subject line of the weekly meeting MOI, the inspector is to include "Weekly Meeting/Failure to Meet a Performance Standard" as the title.

- a. During this meeting, the inspector is to inform:
  - i. Establishment management that they are required to take corrective actions and that the inspector will consistently verify the implementation of those corrective actions. If reassessment of the HACCP system occurs as part of the establishment's corrective actions, that will be verified as well.
  - ii. MPID will assign follow-up sampling of the raw poultry product that exceeded the performance standard. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, follow-up sampling is to occur approximately 30 days after receiving the Category 3 alert.

E. See **Attachment 1** for example email notifications.

## **VII. WEEKLY MEETING TOPICS TO DISCUSS AND DOCUMENT FOR CATEGORY 3 STATUS**

- A. For establishments in Category 3 status, IPP are to utilize weekly meetings to discuss and document the following:
  - 1. Observations from establishment programs or procedures that specifically control *Salmonella*, whether these are in the SSOP, HACCP plan, or other prerequisite programs.
    - a. Observations that are determined to be less than perfect can be discussed and documented in the weekly meeting.
    - b. Observations that rise to a level of noncompliance are to be documented under the appropriate PHIS task in a noncompliance record and subsequently discussed in a weekly meeting.
  - 2. Results or data generated from establishment's programs or procedures including any microbiological sampling data (i.e., if the establishment performs their own *Salmonella* sampling or if they perform microbiological sampling of surfaces in the processing environment such as Aerobic Plate Count).
    - a. The review of these results is to occur in accordance with FSIS Directive 5000.2 – Review of Establishment Data by Inspection Personnel, including being documented in the weekly meeting and through completion of the Review of Establishment Data task in PHIS.
  - 3. Status of the implementation of establishment's corrective actions in response to the Category 3 notification, including the identification of potential causes for the failure and reassessment of the HACCP plan (if applicable).

## **VIII. FOLLOW-UP SAMPLING IN RESPONSE TO A CATEGORY 3 NOTIFICATION**

- A. Establishment corrective actions are to have been implemented prior to beginning follow-up sampling. The Area Supervisor and IPP are to correlate to determine the adequacy of the establishment's corrective actions. They are also to consider production history and the status of the implementation of the establishment's corrective actions to decide when IPP should begin collecting follow-up samples.
  - 1. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, follow-up sampling is to occur approximately 30 days after receiving the Category 3 alert.
- B. In most cases, MPID will collect sixteen (16) follow-up samples in response to a Category 3 alert. Eight (8) will be assigned if it is determined through the Products Profile in PHIS that the product subject to follow-up sampling is produced three (3) days or fewer in a month.
  - 1. The follow-up samples are to be collected daily during operations, if possible.

- a. If the establishment is not operating or not producing the applicable product(s) for which the Category 3 alert was assigned on any date(s) during the follow-up sampling period, a sample is not required to be collected on those date(s).
  - b. IPP is to notify their supervisor and email [MPIDSampling@ncagr.gov](mailto:MPIDSampling@ncagr.gov) when a sample cannot be collected as soon as they are aware that a sample cannot be collected during the follow-up sampling period on a specific date(s) due to product not being produced or the establishment not operating.
- C. Establishments that remain in Category 3 status for longer than 120 days may receive an additional follow-up sampling assignment, even if one was completed within the last 120 days. This determination of need for additional follow-up sampling will be made by the Raleigh Office.

#### **IX. MPID EIAO ACTIONS DURING A PHRE OR FSA**

- A. When a State-inspected establishment reaches Category 3 status, the Supervisory EIAO will add the establishment to the "Food Safety Assessment and PHRE List" as a "Priority 10" for "Establishment failing performance standards."
- B. Once an EIAO has been assigned to perform a PHRE at an establishment assigned to a "Priority 10," they should reference FSIS Directive 10,250.2 – Performance Standards: *Salmonella* Verification Program for Raw Poultry Products for actions to take during the PHRE and, if determined necessary, the subsequent FSA.

**Dr. Karen Beck**  
**State Director**

**DISTRIBUTION:**  
All MPID Personnel

**SUBJECT CATEGORY:**  
Processing

## Attachment 1

1. Email notification of establishments in Category 1 status:

**Email Subject Line:** Category 1 Alert – Product Meets the Performance Standard

Based on the most recently calculated 52-week moving window, Austin's Abattoir (P-XXX) met the *Salmonella* performance standard. This information is based on the last moving window date shown in the chart below.

| Product Tested     | Category | Number of Samples | Number of Positives | Percent Positive | Date              |
|--------------------|----------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Raw Ground Chicken | 1        | 10                | 1                   | 10%              | February 28, 2025 |

Please refer to the [MPID Notice](#) entitled *Salmonella* Performance Standards and Categorization for State Plants Enrolled in a MPID Poultry Sampling Project for additional information.

2. Email notification of establishments in Category 2 status:

**Email Subject Line:** Category 2 Alert – Product Exceeded One Half of the Performance Standard

Based on the most recently calculated 52-week moving window, Austin's Abattoir (P-XXX) exceeded one-half of the *Salmonella* performance standard. This information is based on the last moving window date shown in the chart below.

| Product Tested     | Category | Number of Samples | Number of Positives | Percent Positive | Date              |
|--------------------|----------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Raw Ground Chicken | 2        | 10                | 2                   | 20%              | February 28, 2025 |

Please refer to the [MPID Notice](#) entitled *Salmonella* Performance Standards and Categorization for State Plants Enrolled in a MPID Poultry Sampling Project for additional information, including instructions for plant management notification and documentation.

3. Email notification of establishments in Category 2 status:

**Email Subject Line:** Category 3 Alert – Failure to Meet a Performance Standard

Based on the most recently calculated 52-week moving window, Austin's Abattoir (P-XXX) failed to meet the *Salmonella* performance standard. This information is based on the last moving window date shown in the chart below.

| Product Tested     | Category | Number of Samples | Number of Positives | Percent Positive | Date              |
|--------------------|----------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Raw Ground Chicken | 3        | 10                | 3                   | 30%              | February 28, 2025 |

Please refer to the [MPID Notice](#) entitled *Salmonella* Performance Standards and Categorization for State Plants Enrolled in a MPID Poultry Sampling Project for additional information, including instructions for plant management notification, documentation of notification, information regarding follow-up sampling, etc.