



Nourishing Today  
Sustaining Tomorrow

# Lean Trimmings

The official newsletter  
of the Meat Institute

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## TOP STORY

### **Secretary of Agriculture Rollins Announces Actions to Reduce Burdens on U.S. Pork and Poultry Industries**

Today, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins announced new actions to reduce burdens on the U.S. pork and poultry industries, instructing the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to eliminate administrative requirements that slow production and add costs for American producers.

In a [statement](#) provided by USDA, Secretary Rollins remarked,

“America leads the world in pork and poultry production, and we are committed to ensuring our producers remain competitive on a global scale without being held back by unnecessary bureaucracy. Under President Trump’s leadership, we are cutting unnecessary red tape, empowering businesses to operate more efficiently, and strengthening American agriculture—all while upholding the highest food safety standards.”

Under the policy, FSIS will extend waivers allowing pork and poultry facilities to maintain higher line speeds with rulemaking to formalize these increases to begin immediately. The Meat Institute will provide more details as they become available.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### **China Renews Eligibility of U.S. Pork, Poultry Establishments; Beef Establishments Still Waiting**

The eligibility of several hundred U.S. beef, pork, and poultry establishments that export to China was set to expire yesterday, March 16. This morning, the Meat Institute learned that all poultry establishments that expired yesterday and in February were renewed for another five years, as were the more than 300 pork establishments whose eligibility was slated to expire on March 16. All eligible pork and poultry exports from the renewed facilities should be able to clear customs in China, regardless of the production date. However, China has not yet renewed the eligibility of the more than 390 U.S. beef establishments that expired yesterday and in February.

The Meat Institute, through our collaboration with U.S. Meat Export Federation and USA Poultry and Egg Export Council, also understands that inspections at the Port of Shanghai have increased, with all randomly selected U.S. shipments now subject to full unpacking and inspection. This has significantly increased processing time and may result in additional trucking detention fees. Furthermore, the Meat

Institute has learned that at Yangshan Port, a new notification requires customs brokers to verify the production dates of inspected shipments before submitting documents.

The U.S. government continues to engage with China to press for the renewal of all U.S. establishments, including beef facilities. The Meat Institute convened a meeting this morning with USDA to discuss prioritizing the renewal of U.S. beef export establishments, and is in daily contact with USDA and USTR political and career staff to elevate this issue. We will continue to share updates as they become available.

### **U.S. Implements Tariffs on Steel and Aluminum Imports; Trading Partners Announce Retaliation.**

The U.S. on March 12 implemented 25 percent tariffs on imports of steel and aluminum from all trading partners. Canada is the largest supplier of steel to the U.S., followed by Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, and Vietnam. In response, the European Union [announced](#) plans to impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S. beef and poultry exports following a public comment period. Those tariffs are not expected to take effect until mid-April.

President Trump previously suspended 25 percent tariffs on USMCA-compliant imports from Canada and Mexico through April 2, 2025. As USMCA-compliant imports, meat, poultry, and live animal imports from Mexico and Canada are exempt from tariffs through April 2. Canada, however, has maintained [retaliatory tariffs](#) on most U.S. poultry and sausage imports. Imports of steel and aluminum from Canada and Mexico are not exempt from the March 12 action and face 25 percent tariffs. Canada subsequently published a [second retaliation list](#) that does not include meat exports.

An FAQ document featuring links to previous Meat Institute memos on this topic and a tariff tracker is [here](#). This situation is evolving, and the Meat Institute will continue to share updates about the tariffs, as well as changes to the policy and retaliatory actions, as they become available.

### **Meat Institute Asks USTR to Remove Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade and Open New Markets.**

Last week, the Meat Institute called for the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade and for access to new markets for meat and poultry products. [The comments](#) were submitted in response to the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer's request for comments on unfair trade practices and non-reciprocal trade arrangements. The following are key industry concerns explained in detail in the comments:

- China Continues to Renege on Commitments Made in the U.S.-China Phase One Agreement
- China's Retaliatory Tariffs on U.S. Meat Exports Constrain Growth
- Despite Progress, Persistent Regulations Impede U.S. Beef and Pork Exports to Taiwan
- Opportunities to Access Growing Markets in Southeast Asia are Constrained by Persistent Trade Barriers
- Removing Ongoing Restrictions on Beef, Addressing Other Emerging Concerns are Necessary to Fully Implement KORUS (US Korea Free Trade Agreement)
- European Union and United Kingdom Policies Unduly Restrict Meat and Poultry Exports
- Increasing Establishment Registration Requirements Risk Undermining Market Access for U.S. Meat and Poultry Exports in Global Markets, like Hong Kong

The comments are available [here](#). Contact Senior Director of International Affairs [Michael Schumpp](#) with any questions.

## REGULATORY AFFAIRS

### **FSIS Announces Adjusted Dollar Limitations to Qualify for Retail Exemption.**

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) published in the *Federal Register* the “[Adjusted Dollar Limitations to Qualify for Retail Exemption](#).” The dollar limitations apply to the amount of meat and poultry that a retail store can sell to hotels, restaurants, and similar institutions without disqualifying itself for exemption from federal inspection requirements. In accordance with FSIS' regulations, for calendar year 2025, the value for the retail dollar limitation for meat and meat products (including Siluriformes) is \$103,600; the value for the retail dollar limitation for poultry and poultry products is \$74,800. The dollar limitations will be effective on April 10, 2025. [Read more>>](#)

### **APHIS Reopens Comment Period for Interim Final Rule Updating Indemnity Program for HPAI on Poultry Farms.**

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is reopening the public comment period on an [interim final rule](#) updating the conditions for poultry facilities to receive indemnity and compensation after testing positive for HPAI. Comments will be accepted until April 14, 2025. While the rule was effective upon publication in the *Federal Register* on December 31, 2024, after the comment period closes, APHIS will publish another document in the *Federal Register* including a discussion of all comments received and any amendments the agency is making to the rule. [Read more details>>](#)

### **HHS Directs FDA to Explore Rulemaking to Eliminate Pathway for Companies to Self-Affirm Food Ingredients Are Safe.**

Last week, HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. directed the acting FDA commissioner to take steps to explore rulemaking to revise its Substances Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) Final Rule and related guidance to eliminate the self-affirmed GRAS pathway. Eliminating the self-affirmation process would require companies seeking to introduce new ingredients in foods to publicly notify the FDA of their intended use of such ingredients, along with underlying safety data, before they are introduced in the food supply. [HHS's announcement is here>>](#)

## SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

### **USDA, HHS Share Update on Dietary Guidelines for Americans.**

Last week, following the inaugural meeting of the Make America Healthy Again Commission, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. discussed the status of the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The public comment period closed on February 10, 2025. HHS and USDA said they conducting a line-by-line review of the Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee – released in 2024 under the Biden Administration – and are committed to releasing the final Guidelines ahead of its statutory deadline of December 31, 2025. [Read the announcement here>>](#)

### **CDC Publishes Report on Contributing Factors of Foodborne Illness Outbreaks.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [published a report](#) last week exploring the contributing factors of foodborne illness outbreaks in the U.S., of which there are approximately 800 outbreaks each year. These outbreaks include approximately 15,000 illnesses, 800 hospitalizations, and 20 deaths. A total of 2,677 (40.5%) foodborne illness outbreaks reported during 2014–2022 with information on contributing factors were included in this analysis. Their findings indicate bacterial outbreaks have increased over time while viral outbreaks have decreased, possibly due to safety measures taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus disease 2019. Although contamination often occurred before the food was prepared, typically due to environmental factors or from animals, contamination from sick food workers remained a significant cause of outbreaks, though it declined. Nearly two-thirds of outbreaks analyzed were linked to foods prepared in restaurants, cafeterias, or other commercial settings, highlighting where prevention efforts could have the biggest impact. [Read more>>](#)

### **FSIS Posts National Residue Sampling Report and Data.**

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) posted the [National Residue Program Quarterly Report](#) (October – December 2024) and associated datasets. The report and datasets cover residue sampling data for domestic and import sampling programs for the first quarter of fiscal year 2025. The quarterly report summarizes the chemical residue results for the U.S. National Residue Program for meat, poultry, and egg products. [Read more>>](#)

### **FSIS to Post Aggregate Results for Poultry Tested for *Salmonella*.**

On March 20, 2025, FSIS will post the updated individual establishment *Salmonella* performance standard category information for:

- raw poultry carcasses;
- raw chicken parts; and
- comminuted poultry products.

The updated information can be found on the [Salmonella Verification Testing Program Monthly Posting page on the FSIS website](#). Additionally, FSIS will post the aggregate sampling results showing the number of establishments in categories 1, 2, or 3 for establishments producing young poultry carcasses, raw chicken parts, or not ready-to-eat (NRTE) comminuted poultry products at the location linked above.

## **INDUSTRY EVENTS AND EDUCATION**

*Do you have suggestions for educational content for upcoming Meat Institute Events? [Click here to submit your idea!](#)*

### **[In-Person](#)**

**NEXT WEEK: [Annual Meat Conference](#) | March 24 – 26, 2025**

**Orlando, Florida**

This year marks a significant milestone as the [Annual Meat Conference](#) proudly celebrates 20 years of Power of Meat research! The Power of Meat report has guided the industry with key insights on consumer trends and the evolving meat market. Join us for sessions exploring the industry's past, present, and

future with data-driven discussions and expert discussions. Be part of the Power of Meat's 20-year legacy and join over 2,400 attendees in shaping the next chapter! [See whose attending.](#) [And Learn More>>](#)

### [Environment, Labor & Safety+ Conference](#) | April 21 – 23, 2025

#### **Charlotte, North Carolina**

The Environment, Labor & Safety+ Conference (ELS+) is a platform designed for safety, environmental compliance, and HR professionals in the meat industry to stay ahead of emerging trends and challenges. Our experts focus on practical and applicable insights, sharing essential information to help keep your workforce and facilities safe, engaged, and up to date. This community provides a secure environment where you can discuss challenges and learn from peers about what strategies are effective and which ones aren't. Most importantly, you will leave equipped with tools and talking points to effectively communicate your valuable ideas back at your plant. [Learn More>>](#)

**The [Environmental Committee](#) and [Worker Safety Committee](#) will hold meetings at the ELS+ Conference open to all attendees. Register for these committee meetings with the links above.**

### [Animal Care & Handling Conference](#) | May 13 – 14, 2025

#### **Denver, Colorado**

The Animal Care & Handling Conference is the only event dedicated to advancing animal welfare and handling practices, particularly within the meat industry's slaughter sector. This unique gathering brings together industry leaders, academics, and practitioners, bridging academic research and real-world application. The event encourages open dialogue and shares practical, actionable solutions designed for those working in slaughter operations. Attendees will gain valuable insights, network with peers, and leave equipped with strategies to enhance animal care and handling in their daily practices. [Register>>](#)

### [Webinars](#)

#### [The Evolution of Foreign Material Inspection: From Reactive to Proactive](#) | April 10 at 2 p.m. ET

##### **Sponsored by [FlexXray](#)**

Foreign material contamination has emerged as a critical concern for food safety professionals, prompting the development of enhanced technologies, tools and strategies for FSQA teams to mitigate recall risks. Join us for this webinar as we explore:

- A breakdown of the state of foreign material detection technology
- The stages of foreign material maturity and how to tell where your company sits
- What proactive foreign material management entails - from preventive maintenance to supplier monitoring and routine surveillance.

## EMERGING LEADER SPOTLIGHT



**Jamie Hodge, Gourmet Ranch**

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Food safety is a top concern of both meat companies and the consumers we serve, but ensuring food safety throughout a product's supply chain journey is anything but simple. Corbion's fermented ingredient solutions can help ensure shelf stability and their predictive Listeria Control Model can help companies visualize distribution scenarios and their effects on ingredients so that the right interventions are in place to win the war on foodborne pathogens and deliver safe products that build consumer trust. In the video below, Corbion's research and science teams are interviewed about how companies can leverage these tools. For more information, you can meet with a Corbion representative at the Annual Meat Conference next week or visit their website: <https://www.corbion.com/en/>.

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& Time-Saving Predictive Modeling



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or learn more at [corbion.com](http://corbion.com)



## COMMITTEE NEWS

**A list of upcoming Meat Institute committee activities is provided below:**

- The Meat Institute’s **Animal Welfare Committee** will hold its next virtual meeting on Wednesday, March 28, at 12 p.m. ET. Contact [Casey Gallimore](#) to participate.
- The Meat Institute’s **Communication and Marketing Committee** will hold its next virtual meeting on Tuesday, April 1, at 2 p.m. ET. Contact [Casey Kammerle](#) to participate.
- The Meat Institute’s **Health and Wellness Advisory Committee** will hold its next virtual meeting on Wednesday, April 16, at 2 p.m. ET. Contact [Susan Backus](#) to participate.

The [Environmental Committee](#) and [Worker Safety Committee](#) will hold meetings at the [ELS+ Conference](#) open to all attendees. Register for these committee meetings with the links above.

## WEEKLY SUPPLEMENTS

**Meat Institute Weekly Market Report Released.** Last week’s market report, prepared by Urner Barry by Expana, [is now available](#). According to the report, the weekly Federally Inspected Slaughter figure stood at 587,000 head of cattle, up 9,000 from the previous week. Total pork production was estimated to be 543.7 million pounds, 3.7% higher than the previous week.

**Total Red Meat Production Figures Released.** USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) released figures for total red meat production for the week ending March 15, 2025. An overview of the data is presented below and is available [here](#).