

FSIS Reforms to Include Removal of Dual Labeling Requirements for Certain Quantities of Meat and Poultry Products



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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) announced on April 16, 2019, that it the agency is proposing to amend labeling regulations to remove duplicative net weight and net content requirements for packages that contain certain quantities of meat or poultry products. The proposed regulation would apply to products in quantities of at least one pound or one pint, but less than four pounds or one gallon.

FSIS is proposing this action after receiving a petition submitted by a meat processor in response to USDA's request for ideas to better serve its customers. In a published press release, FSIS administrator Carmen Rottenberg observed that a duplicative labeling requirement does not benefit consumers, and is often an unnecessary burden for industry.

Under the FSIS' proposed rule, commercial food establishments that produce meat and poultry products in packages containing at least one pound or one pint and less than four pounds or one gallon will be allowed to express the weight or contents in one unit of measurement on the product label instead of using both measures. So, for example, a compliant label could state: "Net Wt. 24 oz." or "Net Wt. 1.5 lb." rather than "Net Wt. 24 oz. (1.5 lb.)."

Under the FSIS' proposal, establishments would be allowed to use their current labels until they run out or may elect to use them indefinitely.

To view the proposed rule and for information on how to comment on the proposed rule, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/federal-register/proposed-rules. For more information on federal food law requirements relating to the labeling of meat and other food products, please contact GrayRobinson's Nationwide Food Law Group.