

2017 Annual Meat Conference
Questions and Answers – Regulatory Update
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Do the ground beef regulations require tracking of what products ground beef is used as an ingredient in?

The required records in the Final Rule include:

- (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.

How do merchants get away with grinding beef cuts in stores days after production? Seems tracking would be a big challenge.

USDA requires recordkeeping on all raw beef that is ground at official establishments or in retail stores. Proper labeling is also required and there are regulations regarding pack dates.

Are general statements of allergens on labels such as “produced in a facility that processes” acceptable? We hear more from consumers they want to see this, however Department of Ag does not like an added general statement. They want specific allergens to that product only which we already provide.

The labeling regulations require food products to be properly labeled and for labels to not be misleading. If products contain allergens, they should be declared in the ingredient statement. Appropriate GMPs should be in place to avoid cross contact of allergens if they are not in the product but used in a facility.

Any thoughts on the nominated Secretary of Agriculture from the great state of Georgia? What changes may we see?

Expect the unexpected. If anyone tells you they know what to expect in the next 4 years, they are probably wrong.

Does the ground beef record keeping rule apply to small meat markets that process and sell their own meat products?

Yes, the rule applies to official establishments and retail stores that grind raw ground beef. There are no exemptions in the regulation for small businesses.