

Consumer Complaint Monitoring System

Reporting Consumer Complaints

Objectives

- Be able to:
 - Describe what CCMS is and the purpose
 - Identify what constitutes a consumer complaint
 - Describe the role when a complaint investigation takes place

Introduction

Consumers should expect products to be safe, wholesome, and properly labeled



Introduction

- Consumer complaints help identify unsafe meat, poultry, and egg products



Introduction

- CCMS
 - Electronic database used to record, triage, coordinate, and track all consumer complaints reported to the agency.
 - Directive 5610.1

Consumer Complaint

- Includes product complaints that allege:
 - Illness
 - Injury
 - Foreign object/material
 - Allergic reaction
 - Under processing of RTE product
 - Misbranding
 - Economic adulteration
 - Inferior quality

Online Consumer Complaints

- Electronic Consumer Complaint Form
 - Consumers can report problems with FSIS regulated products to CCMS
 - Illnesses
 - Allergic reactions
 - Injuries
 - Improper labeling
 - Foreign objects
 - <https://ccms.fsis.usda.gov>

Other Venues for Consumers

- Meat and Poultry Hotline
 - Submit an incident
 - Food safety questions
- AskKaren.gov
- Smartphone
 - m.askkaren.gov

Triage

- Classifying consumer complaints to determine the need for further investigation by FSIS

Triage

Not Meeting Definition

- Not a “consumer complaint” if
 - Not initiated by or on behalf of consumer
 - Does not involve FSIS regulated product
 - Whistleblower complaints
 - Complaints about criminal violations
 - Industry competitor complaints

Not Meeting Definition

- Not a “consumer complaint” if
 - Complaints about FNS products
 - Complaints involving retail products
 - Product tampering

Retail Product



Responsible Offices

- CCMS staff of the OPHS HHSD
 - Responsible for overall CCMS management
 - Triage the complaint to determine whether FSIS should take any additional action



Triage Outcomes

- CCMS staff may close the case
 - Document the reason
 - Send a letter to the consumer
 - Send a letter to the establishment

Triage Outcomes

- Request Investigation
 - Laboratory confirmed foodborne illness
 - Allergic reaction to previously diagnosed food allergy
 - Signs that RTE product may be under-processed
 - Unusual signs or symptoms (possible terrorism)
 - More than one similar complaint

Responding

- FSIS will respond to every consumer who registers a complaint with the Agency that is entered into the CCMS.



Role of the EIAO or OIEA Investigator

- As directed by the DO, or Regional office the EIAO or Investigator will investigate consumer complaints



Role of the EIAO or FSIS Investigator

- Immediately contact consumer-verify information
- Visit consumer to verify information is accurate
- Visually inspect the product to verify product information
- Collect relevant information and evidence needed to identify and document problem

Role of the EIAO or OIEA Investigator

- Enter investigation findings in “task note” section of CCMS screen
- Collect and submit laboratory samples following directive 10,210.1 to FSIS laboratory, if requested by the District Office or CCMS Staff

Role of the EIAO or OIEA Investigator

- Contact or visit point of purchase to determine product origin and establishment number
- Meet with plant officials - verify SSOP's, HACCP plan, or other food safety controls are effective
- Discuss information with DDM - may be appropriate to initiate recall proceedings or take an enforcement action
- Contact OIEA and CCMS staff if concerns about criminal activity - document in CCMS

Role of the EIAO or FSIS Investigator

- Immediately contact ODIFP and CCMS staff concerning product tampering or potential food security threats
 - Complete a Non-Routine Incident Report and update the CCMS
- Forward complaints to appropriate agency if product falls outside FSIS jurisdiction

Other Triage Outcomes

- Inform DO of similar complaints about non-identical products
- Refer the complaint to OPPD/LCPS
- Refer the complaint to OIA
- Refer the complaint to ODIFP

Other Triage Outcomes

- Notify OIEA of criminal conduct
- Notify FNS of School Lunch complaints
- Reopen a case, if necessary

Questions?

