

**FACT SHEET - RETAIL MICROBIOLOGICAL TEST PROGRAM FOR
ESCHERICHIA COLI O157:H7 and non-O157:H7 STEC's IN RAW GROUND BEEF**

E. coli O157:H7 and non-O157:H7 STECs (STECs) have been responsible for outbreaks of foodborne illness. The Meat and Poultry Inspection Division (MPID) tests for STECs in raw ground beef at State-inspected establishments and retail locations using State-inspected source materials. The MPID Compliance Program collects these samples at the retail level. Retail sampling continues to be an important part of MPID's *E. coli* sampling program. The likelihood that a specific retail facility will be sampled will depend on what MPID learns about how raw ground beef product is handled at that facility.

When ground beef samples are collected, MPID Compliance Officers will also collect information such as the source materials establishment name, establishment number, lot number, production date, and other identifying information that would be useful in the event of a positive sample result.

If a sample is confirmed positive for any of the STECs, the product, if in commerce, would be subject to a Class I recall. In addition, the lot and all affected products produced using the same source material may be subject to recall. Follow-up samples may be collected at the retail location or the supplier.

SAMPLE IDENTIFICATION FORM NUMBER

DATE COLLECTED

If the initial testing result is negative, no additional testing is necessary. If a presumptive positive is found, you will be notified immediately and confirmation tests on that sample will be performed. Negative results are typically available within 96 hours unless confirmation tests are necessary. You will be contacted when results become available. For additional information contact your compliance officer or the Raleigh Office.