

would still have to test a total of 150 birds within each 90-day period.

In both the *M. gallisepticum* and *M. synoviae* "Clean" classifications, certain multiplier breeding flocks retain their classification through either periodic egg yolk testing or the testing of a 50-bird sample each 90 days. For flockowners who elect to test birds, the regulations provide that a sample of fewer than 50 birds may be tested at any one time if a minimum of 30 birds per flock or 15 birds per pen, whichever is greater, are tested each time and a total of at least 50 birds are tested within each 90-day period. We are proposing to amend paragraphs (c)(1)(ii) and (e)(1)(ii) in both § 145.23 and § 145.33 to increase the sample size to 75 birds per 90 days. We would allow a sample of fewer than 75 birds to be tested at any one time as long as all pens are equally represented and a total of 75 birds are tested by the end of the 90-day period. Increasing the sample size and replacing the per-flock and per-pen minimums with a requirement that all pens be equally represented would provide flockowners with more representative samples of birds that would better reflect the *M. gallisepticum* and *M. synoviae* status of the flock.

Amendment 3—Federally Licensed ELISA Test

The "U.S. S. Enteritidis Monitored" classification is intended to reduce the incidence of salmonella organisms in hatching eggs and chicks through an effective and practical sanitation program at the breeder farm and in the hatchery. The regulations in § 145.23(d) set forth the eligibility requirements for participation by egg-type chicken breeding flocks in the "U.S. S. Enteritidis Monitored" classification. Paragraph (d)(1)(vi) of § 145.23 provides that a federally licensed *Salmonella enteritidis* bacterin may be used to vaccinate birds in a multiplier breeding flock that has been bacteriologically examined for group D salmonella; however, a sample of 350 of the flock's birds must be banded for identification and remain unvaccinated. When the flock reaches at least 4 months of age, 300 of the banded, unvaccinated birds must be officially tested with a pullorum-typhoid antigen. We are proposing to amend the regulations to give flock owners the option of using a federally licensed ELISA test for the required testing of the 300 unvaccinated birds. Because of the relative speed and accuracy of ELISA tests, many breeders already use ELISA tests to monitor their flocks for a number of diseases. Allowing the use of a federally licensed ELISA test in the "U.S. S. Enteritidis

Monitored" classification would give producers another effective disease surveillance tool and may result in fewer false positive and false negative test results.

Amendment 4—Fishmeal as an Animal Protein Source

The "U.S. Sanitation Monitored" classifications for meat-type chickens and turkeys are intended to help flockowners control or reduce the level of salmonella in their flocks. The regulations governing the classifications are located in § 145.33(d) for meat-type chickens and in § 145.43(f) for turkeys. For both meat-type chickens and turkeys, the regulations set forth the monitoring, testing, and management practices that must be conducted by participating flockowners.

The regulations state that feed fed to participating flocks must contain either no animal protein or only animal protein products produced under the Animal Protein Products Industry (APPI) Salmonella Education/Reduction Program. We are proposing to amend §§ 145.33(d) and 145.43(f) to allow the use of fishmeal as an additional protein source for meat-type chicken breeding flocks and turkey breeding flocks participating in the "U.S. Sanitation Monitored" classification. The fishmeal products would have to be in the form of pelletized feed, would have to be produced under the Fishmeal Inspection Program of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and would have to meet the same minimum moisture content and heating criteria that apply to products produced under the APPI program. We believe that allowing the use of fishmeal in pelletized feed would provide flockowners with another option for feeding their flocks, while the proposed inspection, moisture, and heating criteria would ensure that the feed is safe and nutritionally sound.

Amendment 5—Salmonella Enteritidis Clean

As mentioned above, owners of meat-type chicken flocks may participate in the "U.S. Sanitation Monitored" classification for meat-type chickens, which is intended to help flockowners control or reduce the level of salmonella in their flocks. We are proposing to add a new classification for flockowners who, through the "U.S. Sanitation Monitored" classification, have eliminated salmonella in their flocks. The new classification, "U.S. S. Enteritidis Clean," would be given to primary meat-type chicken breeding flocks in which all chickens have been shown to be free of *Salmonella*

enteritidis and in which no *S. enteritidis* has been detected for at least the previous 12 months. This classification would be a means by which the owners of meat-type chicken breeding flocks could attain official acknowledgment that the chicks produced by their flocks are certified free of *S. enteritidis*.

To qualify for the classification, the Official State Agency would have to determine that a flock and the hatching eggs and chicks produced by the flock met certain requirements. The proposed requirements are modeled after those procedures already being used successfully in the "U.S. S. Enteritidis Monitored" classification for egg-type chickens.

The flock would have to either originate from a "U.S. S. Enteritidis Clean" flock or have been sampled for *S. enteritidis* by an authorized laboratory. The sampling would entail the bacteriological examination of meconium from the chicks and from a sample of chicks that died within 7 days after hatching. Cultures from group D positive samples would have to be serotyped.

All feed fed to the flock would have to contain either no animal protein or only animal protein products produced under the APPI or NMFS inspection programs mentioned above. The feed would have to meet the same minimum moisture content and heating criteria that are required for the "U.S. S. Enteritidis Monitored" and "U.S. Sanitation Monitored" classifications in order to destroy disease-producing organisms that could contaminate the feed and, as in the other classifications, animal protein supplements in mash feed could come only from crumbled pelletized feed. Additionally, the feed would have to be stored and transported in such a manner as to prevent possible contamination.

As with other Plan programs, flocks participating in this proposed program would have to be maintained in compliance with the flock sanitation procedures of § 147.21, the cleaning and disinfection procedures of § 147.24(a), and the procedures in § 147.26 for establishing isolation and maintaining sanitation and good management practices for the control of salmonella and mycoplasma infections.

As a means of monitoring the flock's environment for salmonella organisms, we would require that environmental samples be collected from the flock after the flock reaches 4 months of age. The environmental samples would have to be collected by an authorized agent using the procedures described in § 147.12 of the regulations. The authorized agent would continue to