



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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USDA SEEKS COMMENT ON PROPOSAL TO ALLOW PORK RINDS FROM REGIONS WITH SWINE DISEASE INTO THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, July 1, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is proposing to allow, under certain conditions, the importation of cooked pork rinds--a snack food made from deep-fried pork skins--from regions where foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), swine vesicular disease (SVD), African swine fever (ASF) and classical swine fever (CSF) are considered to exist.

In order to be eligible for importation into the United States, all pork and pork products imported from regions where these diseases exist must be cooked or cured in such a manner that the pathogens of concern are inactivated. After preparing a risk assessment, APHIS has concluded that the pork skin cooking methods examined exceed these requirements. The pork skins would be deep-fried, or baked and then deep-fried, for an extended period. Both of these cooking processes exceed APHIS' regulatory requirement for cooked meat.

To further safeguard U.S. animal health, the pork would have to be processed at a USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service-approved facility and all shipments accompanied by a foreign animal disease certificate from the country of origin.

FMD, SVD, ASF and CSF are contagious viral diseases. They are not transmissible from animals to humans and do not affect human health. APHIS has a strong system in place for detecting and responding to outbreaks of foreign animal diseases and places trade restrictions on affected regions to protect against the introduction of diseases of concern.

This action is scheduled for publication in the July 2 *Federal Register*.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Sept. 2. Send two copies of postal mail or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. APHIS-2008-0032, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Comments can be submitted on the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2008-0032>.

Comments are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and also can be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817.

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