



## Consumer Federation of America

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 21, 2015

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### **CFA Statement on New FSIS Performance Standards for Poultry Parts and Ground Poultry**

Consumer Federation of America today applauded the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) for issuing the first ever performance standards for *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* for raw poultry parts and updated standards for ground poultry.

“Pathogen rates on poultry parts and ground poultry are way too high,” said Chris Waldrop, Director of the Food Policy Institute at Consumer Federation of America. “These standards are essential to protect consumers and help drive down rates of contamination in these products.”

FSIS’ performance standards related to poultry have historically focused only on poultry carcasses. While reducing contamination on the carcass is critical, this approach has failed to address contamination levels once the bird is cut up into parts or processed into ground poultry. FSIS’ own testing revealed high prevalence levels of contamination on raw chicken parts - 24.02% for *Salmonella* and 21.70% for *Campylobacter*. FSIS’ previous standards for ground poultry only addressed *Salmonella* (and not *Campylobacter*) and were set at nearly 50% so that a plant could fail almost half of FSIS’ sampling set and still meet the standard.

FSIS’ previous approach also did not account for the way consumers’ poultry purchases have changed over the years. Consumers today are more likely to purchase poultry parts such as breasts, wings and thighs, or ground poultry, than they are to purchase whole birds.

“These new performance standards will help improve the safety of the products that consumers are most frequently purchasing and consuming,” Waldrop said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that over 1 million cases of salmonellosis and 1.3 million cases of campylobacteriosis occur each year in the United States. Raw or undercooked poultry is a frequent source of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* illnesses, though does not account for all illnesses linked to these pathogens. Unfortunately, the United States has made almost no progress in reducing illnesses from *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in the past decade. The incidence of both *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* infections in 2013 is higher than it was in 2003.

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Consumer Federation of America is an association of 280 non-profit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, education and advocacy.