



United States
Department of
Agriculture

**PROPER REMOVAL OF
TONSILLAR MATERIAL
FROM BEEF TONGUES**

AND

**DOCUMENTATION OF
SRM NON-COMPLIANCE**

COURSE INSTRUCTIONS

FSIS-808 Beef Tonsil Material Removal and Non-Compliance Documentation

This course is divided into two parts: *FSIS-808 Content* which contains the course content and *FSIS-808 Quiz* which contains a 10-question quiz.

To receive credit for the course, both parts of the course must be completed via AgLearn and participants must pass the quiz with a score of 70% or better.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES

Following this training you should be able to:

- Determine if tonsillar SRM material is fully removed from edible beef product.
- Describe how to verify that establishments are properly removing tonsillar material from beef tongues.
- Document a regulatory non-compliance related to SRM removal.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES

Under 9 CFR 310.22 :

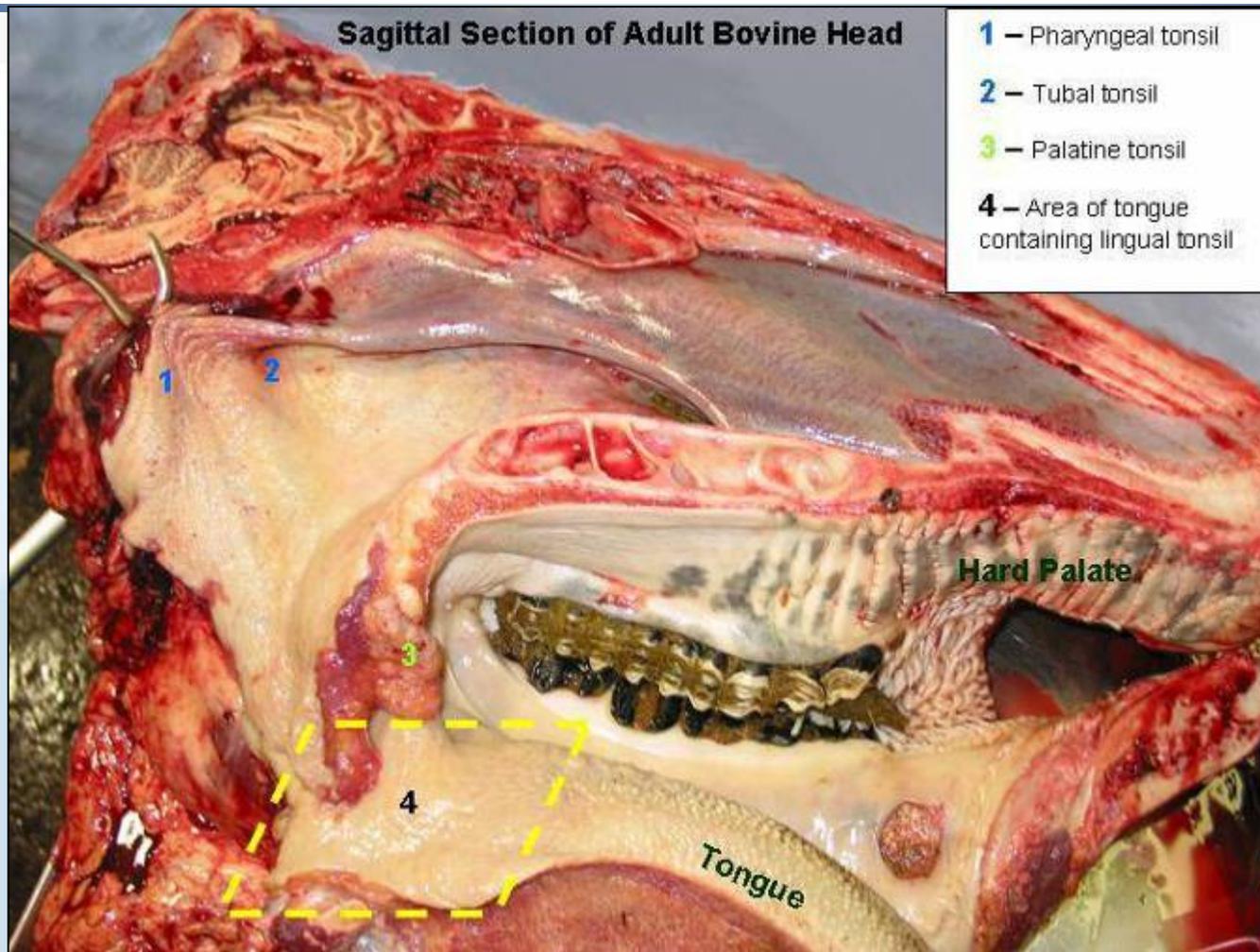
- The tonsils from cattle of all ages are designated as SRMs.
- The establishment is required to develop, implement, and maintain written procedures into their food safety systems for the removal, segregation, and disposition of all SRMs.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES

In the bovine, there are 5 tonsil groups in the head. **Two** are associated with the tongue.

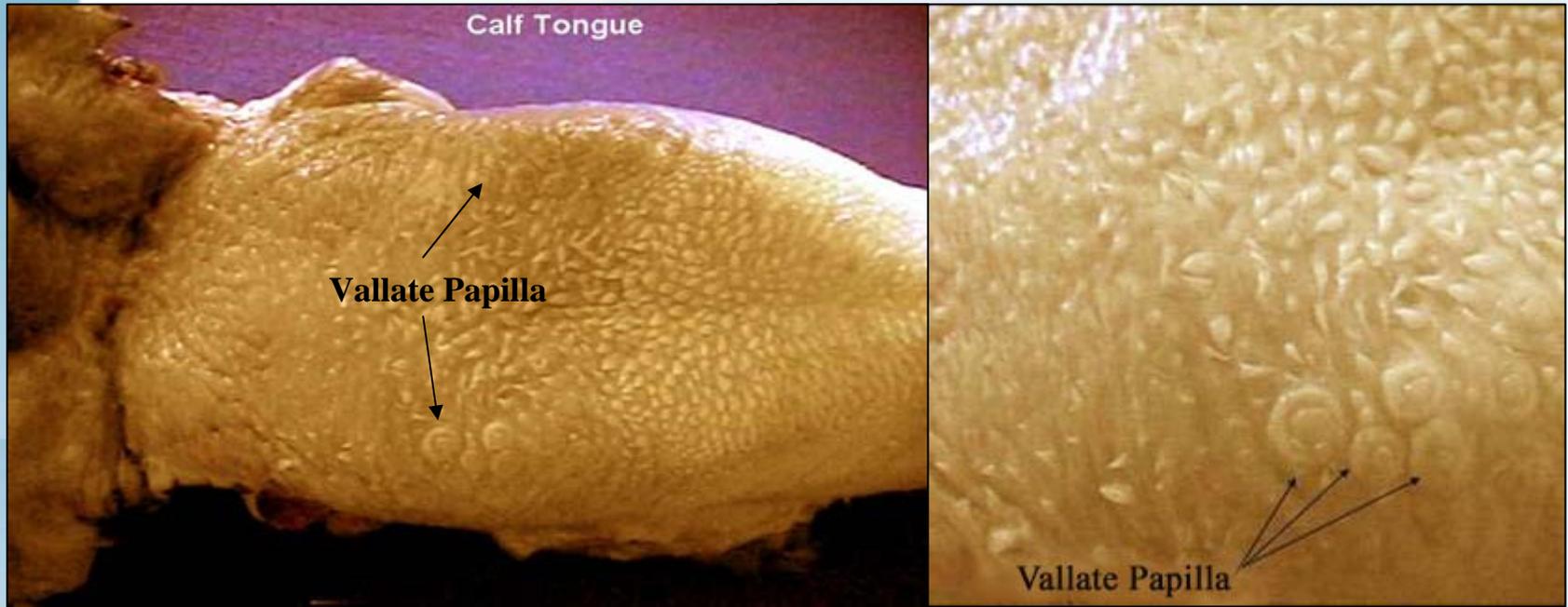
- Pharyngeal Tonsil
- Tonsil of the Soft Palate
- Tubal Tonsils (Paired)
- **Palatine Tonsils (Paired)**
- **Lingual Tonsil**

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES



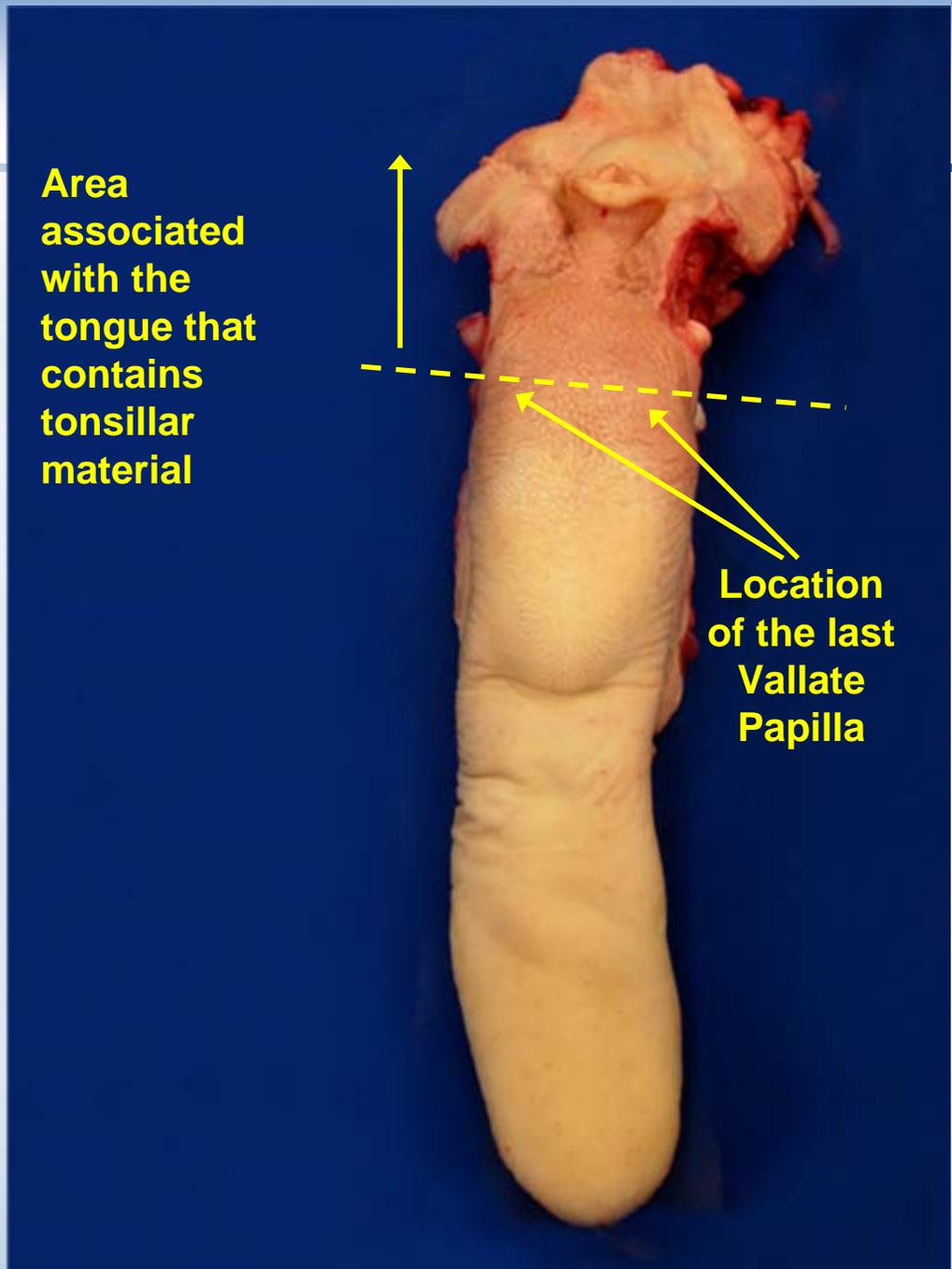
Location of tonsillar material in the bovine head.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES



Tonsillar material in the beef tongue is located behind the last vallate papilla. This picture shows the location of the vallate papilla on the tongue and a close-up of the papilla so you can see what they look like grossly.

- This photo identifies the specific portion of the tongue that contains tonsillar material (i.e. lingual and palatine tonsils) which are considered SRMs.

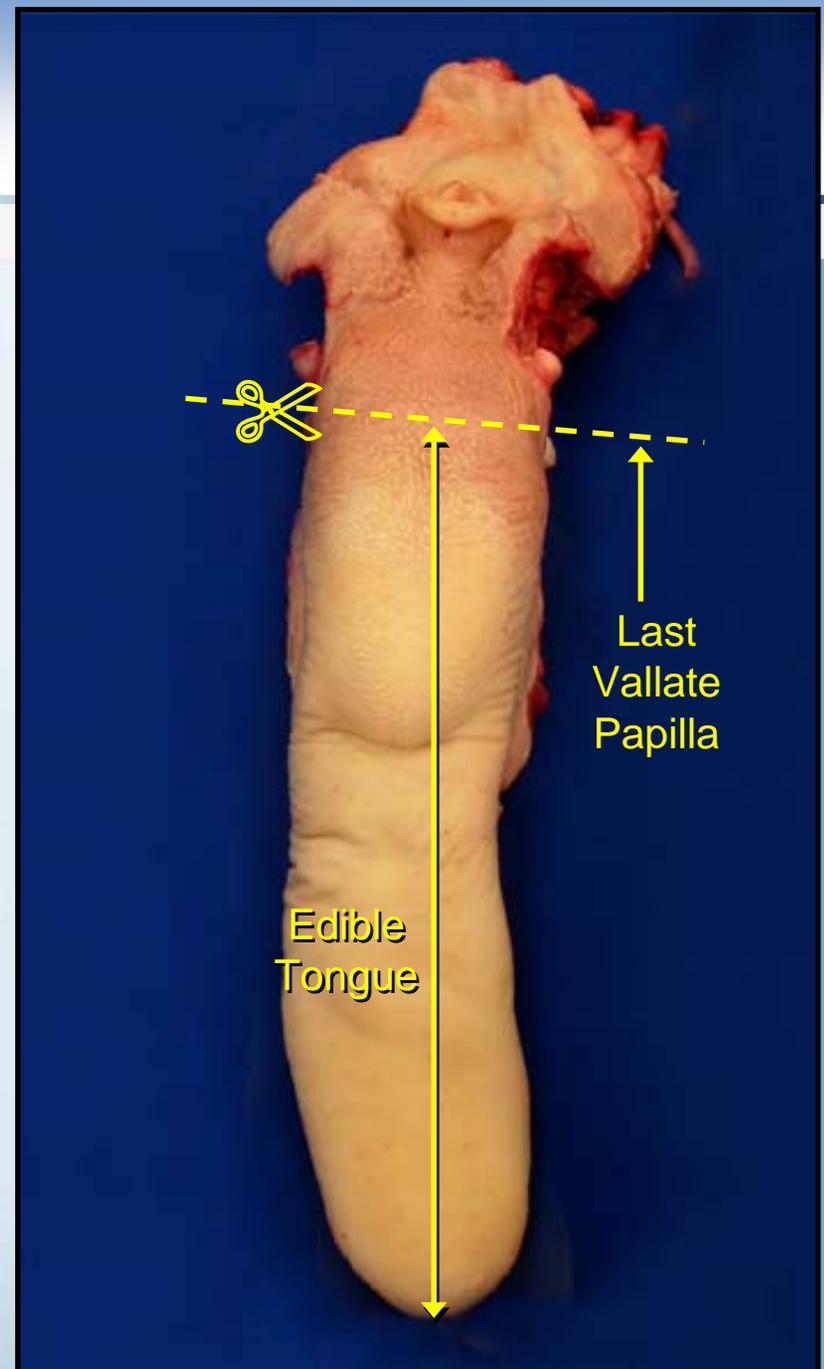


REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES

Establishments may accomplish the removal of beef tonsillar material by any means, including:

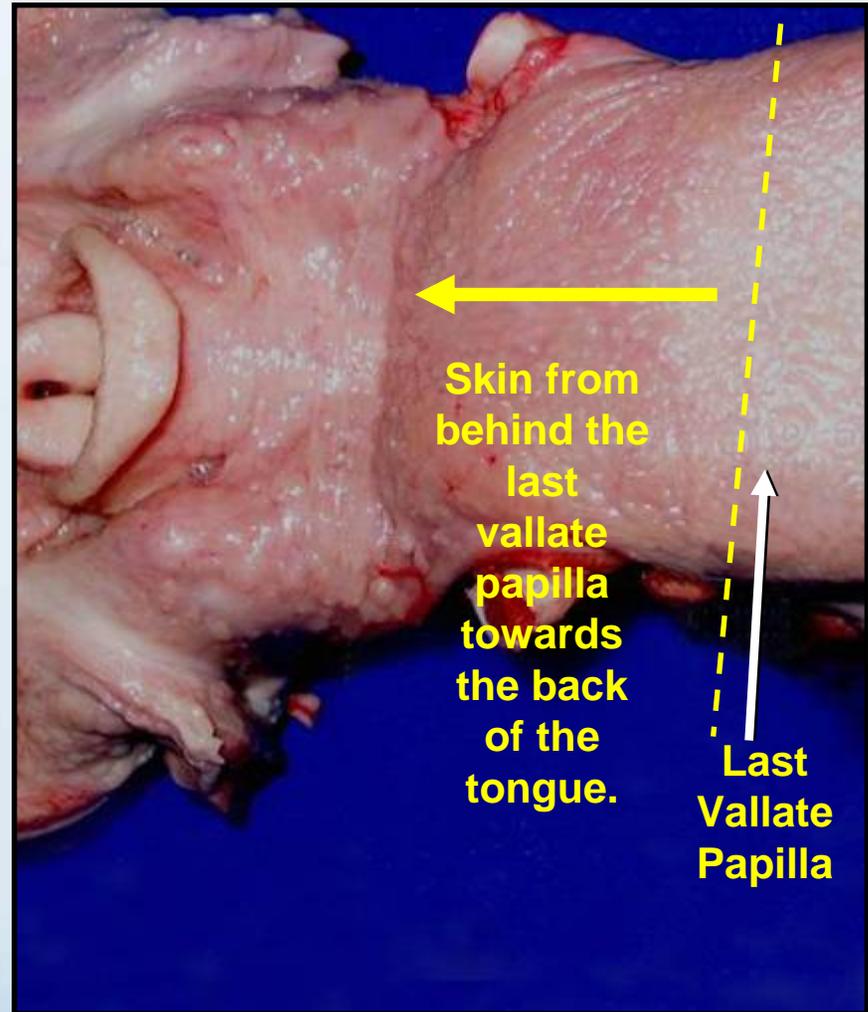
- using a tongue skinning machine to remove part of the outer layer of the affected tongue and the tonsillar material just below the mucosal surface; or
- making a transverse cut just behind the last (most rear) vallate papilla.

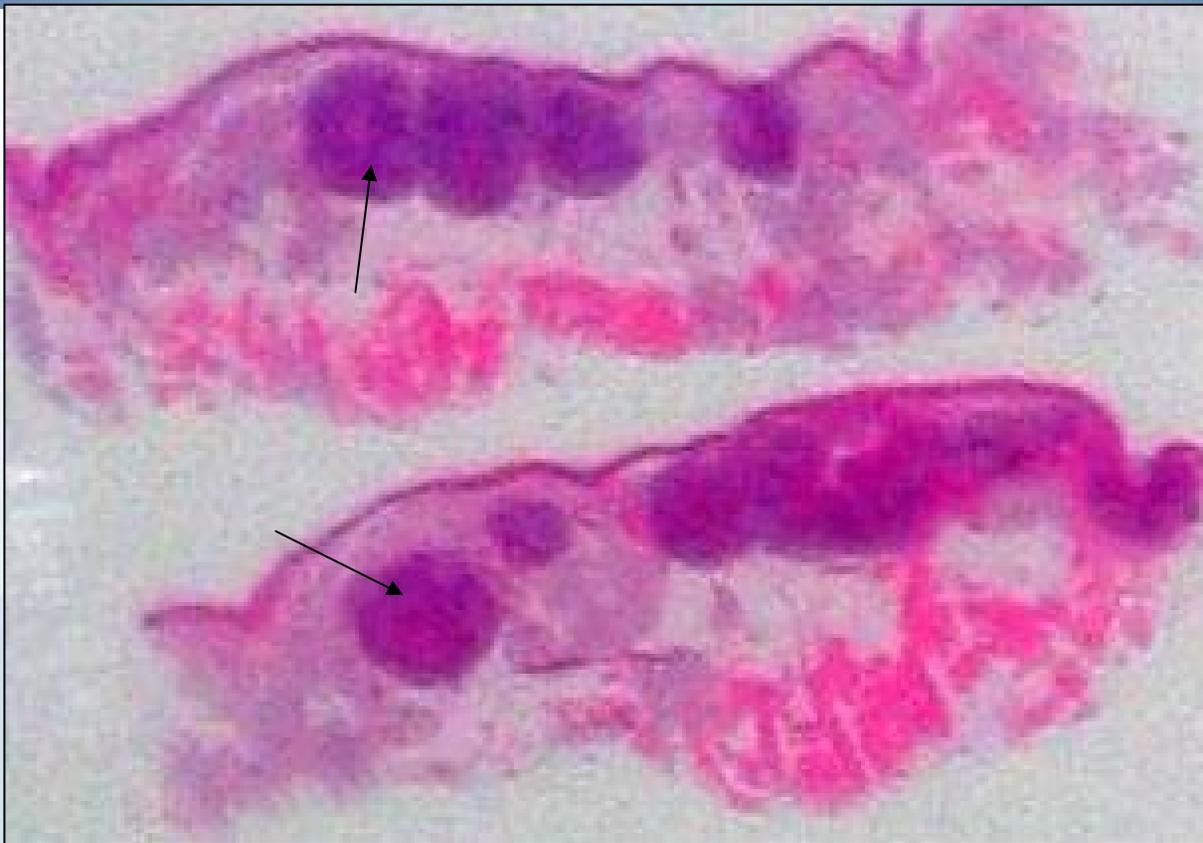
- Removal of the edible portion of the tongue can be accomplished by making a transverse cut (yellow line) just behind the last vallate papilla.



REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSIL TISSUE BY SKINNING

- Establishments may also accomplish the removal of beef tonsil material by removing a minimum of 5 mm of the outer layer of the affected portions of the tongue (e.g. behind the last vallate papilla).





Histological sections of the tongue mucosa showing lymphoid nodules (arrows).

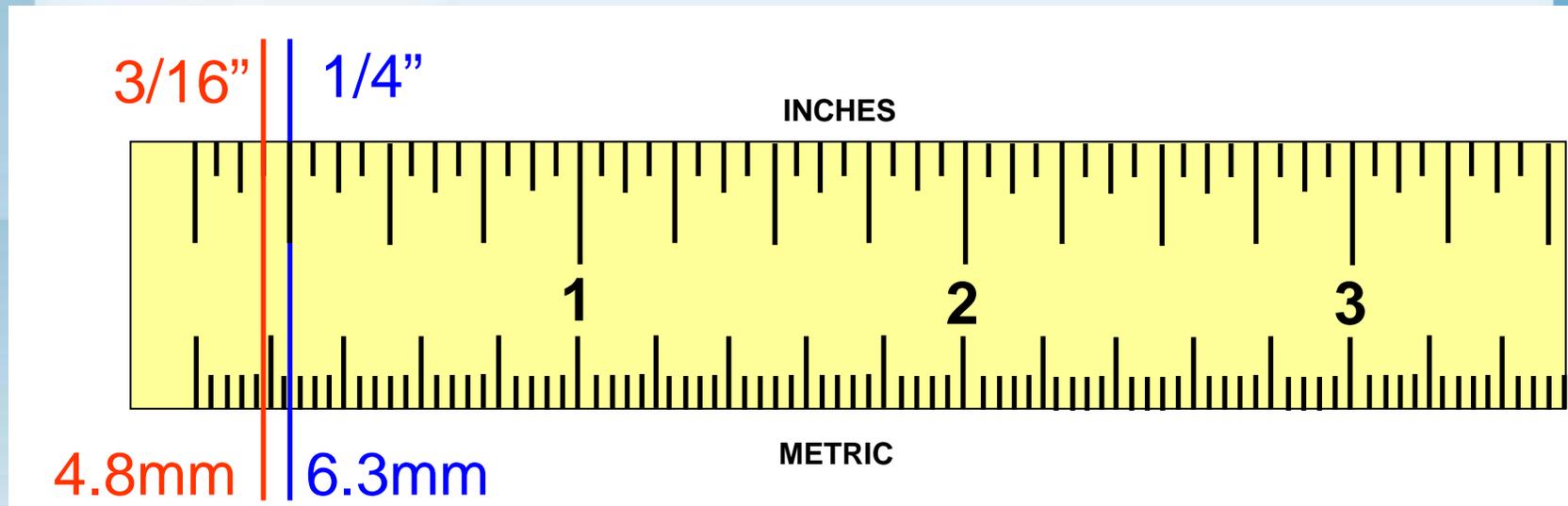
REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSIL TISSUE BY SKINNING



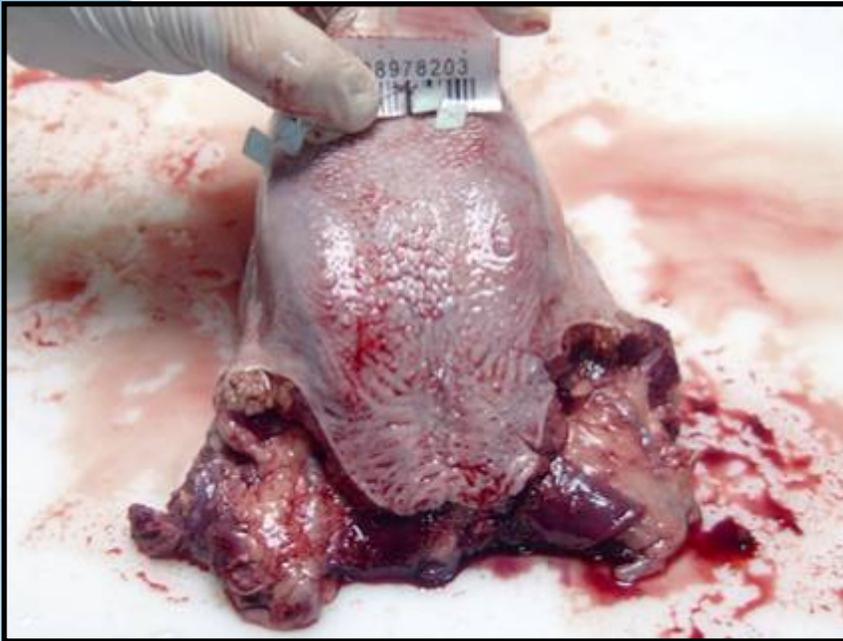
- For tonsillar material to be completely removed from beef tongues and to prevent cross contamination of the skinning blade, machine and tongues with tonsillar material (SRMs), establishments are to remove **no less than** 5 mm from the surface of the affected portions of the tongue.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSIL TISSUE BY SKINNING

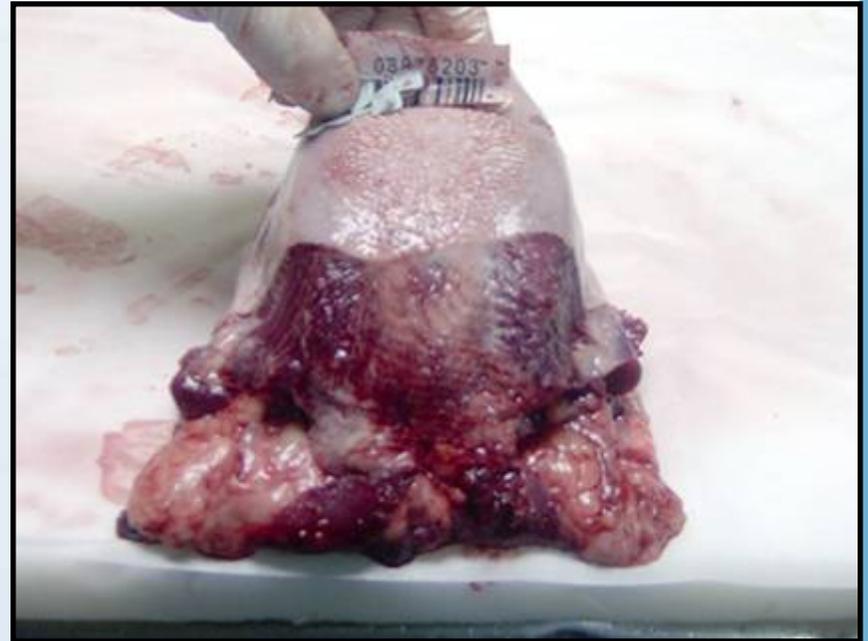
Note that $3/16''$ equals 4.8 mm and $1/4''$ equals 6.3 mm.



REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSIL TISSUE BY SKINNING

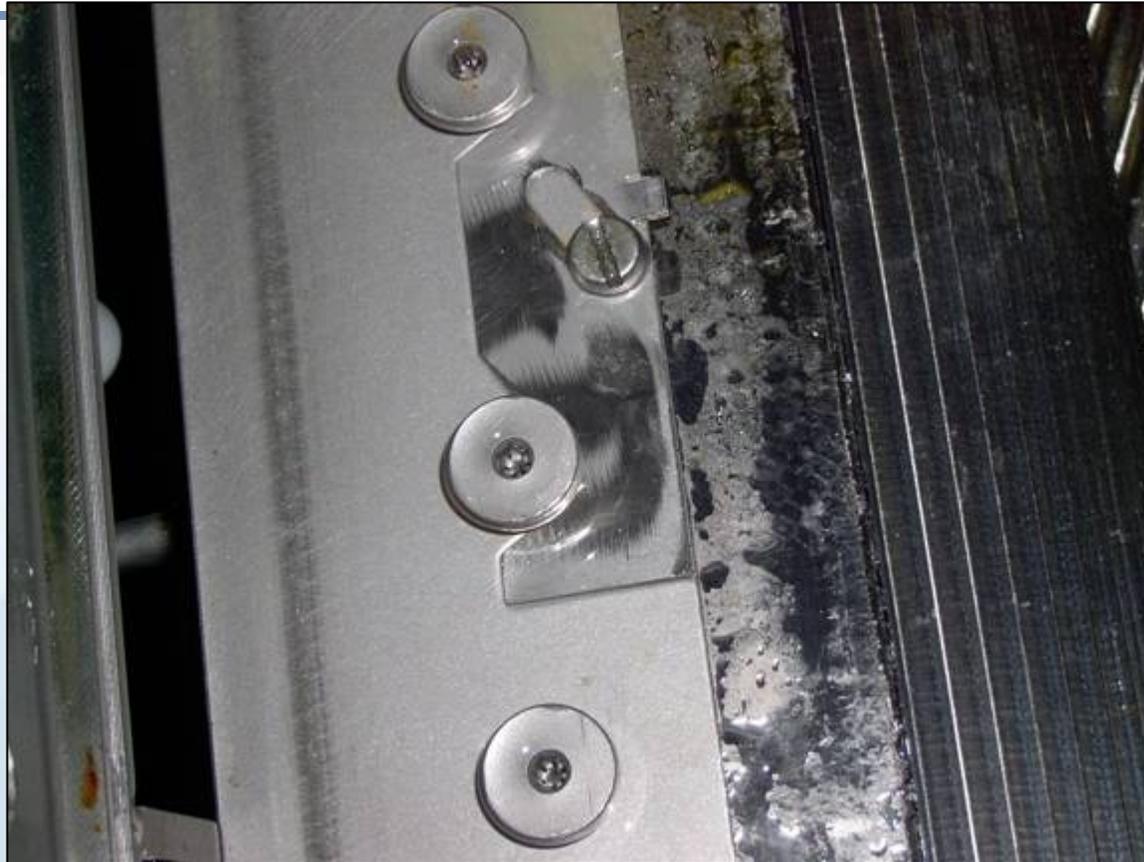


A complete tongue that has been excised from the head but tonsillar material has not been removed.



The same tongue after it has been through a skinning machine, set to a minimum setting of 5mm to ensure complete tonsillar material removal.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSIL TISSUE BY SKINNING



This is an example of a mechanism that determines the depth setting for a skinning blade. This mechanism needs to be set at a minimum of 5mm to assure adequate removal of visible tonsillar material and to prevent cross contamination of cattle tongues.

REMOVAL OF BEEF TONSILLAR MATERIAL FROM TONGUES

Inspection program personnel can find additional information and diagrams on the location of the tonsillar material on the **FSIS Technical Service Center (TSC)** web site at:

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About FSIS/Technical Service Center/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_Fsis/Technical_Service_Center/index.asp)

For technical questions, contact the

**Technical Service Center
(800) 233-3935.**

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- The IIC at all beef slaughter plants should meet with plant management about harvesting beef tongues.



DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

- The IIC is to inform the establishment that if they decide to begin harvesting beef tongue for human food, the plant will need to reassess its food safety system as set out in 9 CFR 417.4 (a)(3) and FSIS Notice 4-04.

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- The process by which the establishment uses to remove, segregate and dispose of beef tonsillar material should meet the requirements for the removal, segregation and disposal of SRMs (9 CFR 310.22 (d)(3)).
- Any change in the procedures for the removal of SRMs will need to be properly incorporated into the establishments food safety system (9 CFR 310.22(d)(1)).

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Thus if an establishment chooses to change from using the transverse cut to a skinning machine to remove tonsillar material from the tongue, it will need to reassess its HACCP system as set out in 9 CFR 417.4(a)(3) because the use of a skinning machine is a new “slaughter or processing system,” and represents a change at the establishment that may affect the HACCP system.

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES



- In a memorandum of interview (MOI), the IIC should document who attended the meeting, the date and time of the meeting, what was discussed and any documents that were shared with the plant management.

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- The PHV is to verify into which program (i.e. HACCP plan, Sanitation SOPs, or prerequisite program) the establishment incorporated any procedures associated with SRM removal, including beef tonsillar material.

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

If the establishment will not be harvesting beef tongue for human food:



- the PHV should verify that the establishment has effective head dressing procedures in place for the complete removal of the tongue and its associated lymph nodes, visible tonsillar material, fatty tissues and salivary glands.

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

If the establishment will be harvesting beef tongue for human food:



Tongue with tonsillar material removed by skinning machine.

- The PHV is to verify that the establishment has procedures to effectively remove tonsillar material from the beef tongue and head.
- The removal process must be verifiable.

FSIS VERIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES: SKINNING MACHINES

When the establishment chooses to use a skinning machine to remove tonsillar material, PHV's must verify that the establishment has appropriately addressed the use of the skinning machine in its food safety systems and in particular addressed procedures to ensure that:

- no less than 5 mm is removed from the surface of the affected portions of the tongue, and
- tonsillar tissue (i.e., SRMs) does not remain on the blade or any part of the skinning machine in a manner that may cross-contaminate product with SRM material.

DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

- Off-line inspection program personnel are to verify the execution of the establishment's food safety system procedures to ensure the removal of tonsillar material from the tongue complies with 9 CFR 310.22 by following the directions in FSIS Directive 5000.1, Revision 2.

DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

- If an establishment does not have the appropriate procedures in place to effectively remove SRMs (including tonsillar material), or fails to execute their procedures as written then, FSIS inspection program personnel are to take the appropriate action as set out in FSIS Notice 9-04 and FSIS Directive 5000.1, Revision 2, Amendment 1.

DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

If an establishment does not meet the regulatory requirements for controlling SRMs, Inspection program personnel are to:

1. complete an NR.
2. cite 9 CFR 310.22 in the Relevant Regulation section, along with any other regulation with which there has been a non-compliance.
3. notify the appropriate establishment official.
4. verify that the corrective actions implemented by the establishment meet the requirements of 9 CFR 417.3(a).

DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

- Inspection program personnel are to describe the non-compliances in the narrative section, block 10, of the NR.
- The narrative should completely describe the SRM non-compliance, and include the type of SRM.

DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

- It is important that all relevant regulations be cited in the NR. These citations provide data that are the basis for critical, risk-based FSIS decisions.
- If there are other regulatory non-compliances cited in the NR, each non-compliance should be described in the narrative as well.

DOCUMENTATION OF SRM NON-COMPLIANCE

- Statements in Block 10 of the NR should completely and adequately support each regulatory non-compliance cited.

REFERENCES

The following documents will open in the same window. To return to this screen, use the back arrow on your browser toolbar.

[FSIS Notice 10-07](#)

Instructions for Verifying the Proper Removal of Visible Beef Tonsillar Material From Tongues By Use of Skinning Machines

[FSIS Notice 05-07](#)

Revised Documentation Related to Specified Risk Materials (SRMs) and Other Regulations

[IKE Scenario 01-07](#)

Citing Relevant Regulations When Documenting SRM Noncompliance

QUESTIONS



For questions about beef tonsil removal, verification procedures and documentation of non-compliance with SRM procedures, contact the Technical Service Center at (800) 233-3935.

After you have thoroughly read the course content and are ready to complete the quiz, close the content window.

Click on the ***Return to Content Structure*** button.

Click on the ***FSIS-808 Quiz*** link, located under the *Content Structure* heading, to launch the course quiz.

When you have completed the quiz with a passing score (70% minimum), you may print a Completion Certificate from your Learning History page.