Industry-Led Food Safety Initiatives for Produce

USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum - 2013

Fresh produce from our families to yours
Lead or Follow?

Proposed rules share key aspects.

• Confirm industry’s primary role on food safety
  • Proposals are based in part on industry-developed practices and FDA guidance documents that many in the industry are following

Key Aspects of Proposals

• Confirm industry’s primary role on food safety
• Risk-based and flexible
• Address small business issues
• Extensive government, stakeholder input
Industry Leadership - Historical

• ’95 – First Industry GAPs
• ’98 – FDA/USDA GAPs
  “GUIDE TO MINIMIZE MICROBIAL FOOD SAFETY HAZARDS FOR FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES”
• ’04 – Industry Commodity Specific Guidance
• ’09 – FDA Commodity Specific Guidance
• ’06 – Industry moves to “specific, measurable, verifiable”
• ’13 – FSMA Rules
How do you constantly improve?

- Requires investment of resources
- Continued dialogue with industry, academia, and public health
- Must be routine & responsive
Informed by targeted inquiry!

- Center for Produce Safety (CPS) founded in 2007
- Industry, government, scientific and academic partners
- Leader in science-based food safety research
- Funded 69 projects totaling $10.6 million
- Recognized for “Partners in Research” program
6.0 SESSION I- GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES – BUFFER ZONES AND ANIMAL VECTORS

- Project #1: *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 in bioaerosols from cattle production areas: evaluation of proximity and airborne transport on leafy green crop contamination
- Project #2: Developing buffer zone distances between sheep grazing operations and vegetable crops to maximize food safety
- Project #3: Evaluation of amphibians and reptiles as potential reservoirs of foodborne pathogens and risk reduction to protect fresh produce and the environment
- Project #4: Wildlife survey for *E. coli* O157:H7 in the central coastal counties of California
Verification of Preventive Practices

Programs
• California and Arizona LGMA’s
• California Cantaloupe Marketing Order
• Florida & California Tomatoes

Common Tenets
• Industry Led, Preventive practices
• Verified by State/Federal Inspectors
• Funded by Industry
• Iterative in nature
Greater Supply Chain Accountability

- Close gaps and inconsistencies in the supply chain
- Create a clear and consistent industry understanding about risk and liability
- Challenge cultures that don’t support food safety or fail to make it a component in the profitability equation
Greater Supply Chain Transparency

• “Food Safety Inside”
• Visible at each touchpoint
• Visible to consumer
• Market food safety?
Mission & Goal

• Mission: Increased consumer confidence in produce safety – through increased safety

• Goal: Partnership, collaboration and accountability throughout the supply chain
Shifting Industry’s Paradigm

1. A process that is collaborative, inclusive and results-focused

2. A need to think boldly, act creatively and approach altruistically

3. To represent the consensus of thought leaders who will act to influence their individual organizations

4. To recognize today’s supply chain as a complex web of “produce touch points” where an organization may assume many roles in the grow – buy – sell – broker – source - distribute equation

5. The need to create lasting and meaningful impact with “cultural shifts” throughout the industry