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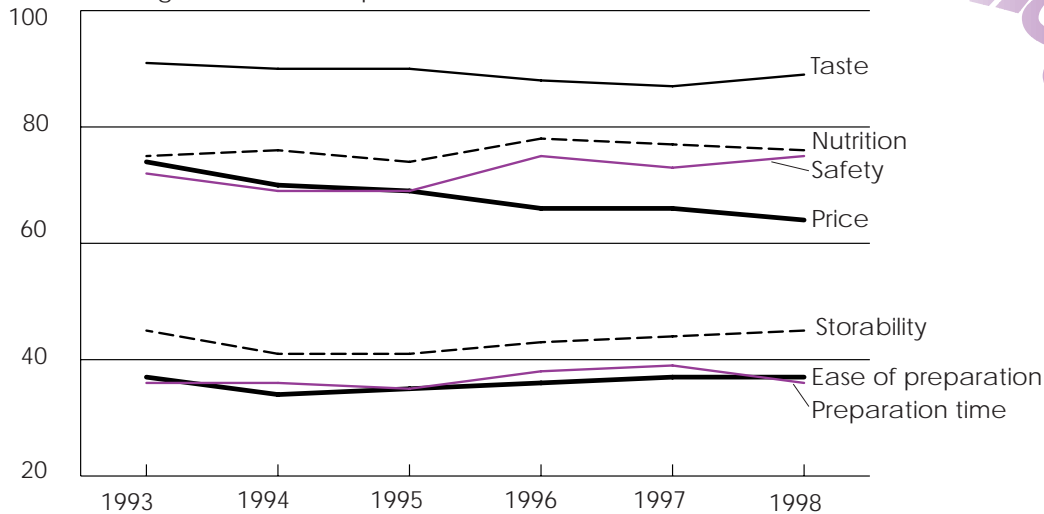
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# Food Safety at a Glance

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## Consumers Rank Safety Among Top Concerns About Food

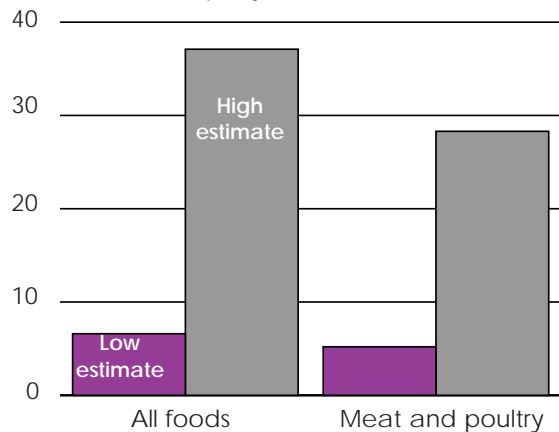
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## Fact Is, Foodborne Illness Costs Society Billions of Dollars Each Year in Medical Costs and Productivity Losses

Even these estimates understate the true picture, as many cases of foodborne illness go unreported because not everyone seeks medical care

Billions of dollars per year



Source: Jean Buzby, Tanya Roberts, C.-J. Jordan Lin, James MacDonald. *Bacterial Foodborne Disease: Medical Costs and Productivity Losses*, AER-741. USDA's Economic Research Service. Aug. 1996.

The author is a branch chief with the Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, USDA.



## New Programs To Promote Food Safety

### National Food Safety Initiative

- Strengthen food safety inspection, research, and education

### Produce and Imported Food Safety Initiative

- Improve the safety of domestic and imported fruits and vegetables

### "HACCP" systems for meat, poultry, and seafood inspection

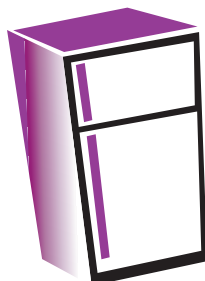
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point systems to reduce the risk of microbial contamination in meat and poultry

### New labeling requirements for unpasteurized juices

- Unpasteurized juices must be labeled to warn consumers of possible health risks

### New surveillance and detection efforts to rapidly detect and combat foodborne illness outbreaks

- Survey activities is seven "FoodNet" sites around the Nation



## The Elderly, Infants, and Pregnant Women Are Most at Risk for Foodborne Illness

Some sources of foodborne illness are...

- bacteria, such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7, and *Campylobacter*
- Parasites, such as *Toxoplasma gondii*
- Viruses, such as hepatitis A and Norwalk virus

Some people have a greater risk of foodborne illness...

- Elderly
- Infants, especially under 1 year of age
- Pregnant women
- People with weakened immune systems, such as cancer or transplant patients or people with HIV/AIDS
- People with chronic illness, such as diabetes or kidney disease



## Food Safety Is Everyone's Responsibility

### Farm

Pathogens are found to some extent in all farm animals

Livestock operations should be separate from produce operations

Clean water should be used to irrigate produce

### Storage/transport

Keep products cold

Clean tanks between shipments

### Slaughter/processing

Apply HACCP preventive systems

New technologies can reduce the risk of pathogen contamination

### Consumer

*Clean:* Wash hands and surfaces often

*Separate:* Don't cross-contaminate

*Cook:* Cook to proper temperatures

*Chill:* Refrigerate promptly

