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Coming Attractions

Consumers and Markets

Economic Incentives, Public Policies, and Private Strategies to Control Foodborne Pathogens

New threats, like “mad cow disease,” are altering global markets. Recent food safety innovations have been spurred by stringent standards demanded by large buyers, domestic and overseas, and by regulatory agencies. While Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems started as a private-public partnership to develop safer food for US astronauts, in the mid-1990s the Food and Drug Administration and the Food Safety and Inspection Service in USDA required HACCP for seafood, meat and poultry, juice, and now shell eggs. Both private and regulatory HACCP systems are evolving with new scientific information, innovative equipment, and new pathogen tests and management strategies. Some companies are using continuous food safety innovation as a competitive strategy. Not only are global markets at stake, but foodborne pathogens cause acute illness in 76 million US consumers, 5,000 deaths, and an unknown number of chronic complications annually.

Agriculture and Trade

US in WTO

The United States has initiated numerous regional and bilateral trade negotiations over the last four years and is heavily engaged in multilateral trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO). These initiatives have important implications for US agriculture in terms of market access and expanding trade. Progress in the WTO will likely mean not only more open markets, but some changes in trade distorting domestic support used by the United States, the European Union, and Japan. This series of articles examines prospects for progress in the WTO, challenges created by recent Dispute Settlement rulings, and the implications of the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement.

We are working on future theme coverage on supply chains, appraising nonmarket environmental attributes, GMOs, and checkoff programs.