

Food safety - GW

POSSIBLE FOOD SAFETY EVENTS

Research and Technology

Issue a directive to Secretaries of USDA and HHS working with OSTP to establish Presidential awards for advances in food safety research and technology. The directive could also include a national food safety research and technology conference, for which there is great interest among all constituencies.

Or Issue an Executive Order on food safety research and technology: components include:

- Interagency Research Council chaired by OSTP (only Federal members or Could this become a Presidential Commission and have non-Federal members?) Regular meetings, annual report to POTUS and Congress

- Annual national public meetings/conference to discuss advances in research and technology

- Annual or Biannual Presidential Awards for Advances in Food Safety Research and Technology--Basic and Applied Awards, top three in each category? Open competition to government, private labs, and companies.

The directive may be better since the details of the awards need to be sorted out.

Host a meeting on food safety research and technology: invite research labs, companies to demonstrate their products, demonstrate DNA fingerprinting foodnet system. This would need sufficient lead time to truly be successful. It would be better to incorporate a meeting into the conference, or the conference could be a forum for a speech.

Tour a FoodNet sentinel site that has DNA fingerprinting--High Tech early warning system to detect and limit foodborne illness outbreaks. The Secretary viewed this technology in Seattle. It is great. CBS news is interested.

Outbreak Response

Issue an Executive Order formalizing FORCG--the Foodborne Outbreak Response Coordinating Group. The purpose of FORCG is to improve the coordination and outbreak response to foodborne illness by all federal, state, and local agencies involved. HHS and USDA, and EPA, have been developing an MOU on FORCG. We could either formally sign the MOU or the MOU could be changed into an Executive Order. I am attaching a DRAFT MOU for your review.

Food Safety Education

Do a Fight Bac Event with school children, highlight the importance of safe food handling

Get restaurants, fast food companies, and major retailers to agree to promote Fight Bac consumer education message and host an event announcing their participation.

Is there a restaurant/retail manager/employee education effort we could undertake? I.e. develop training/education materials?

Miscellaneous

Tour a meat or poultry plant that is implementing the new food safety system

Is there a food code event we could arrange? Challenge states to adopt the food code?

Tax credits for new technology?

SBA coordinate regional meetings with small business re education, technical and financial assistance?

Food Safety - Chicken
EW



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MESSAGE: Consumer Report article on poultry. It is in the March edition, which arrived in subscriber's homes last night. On the newstand Monday. Working on talking points.

Chicken

What you don't know can hurt you

Hungry for a cheap, low-fat alternative to beef, Americans are eating more chicken than ever—an estimated 74 pounds per person last year, up from 58 pounds in 1987. Precise numbers of illnesses associated with eating undercooked chicken and foods contaminated by raw chicken are impossible to come by: It's believed that fewer than 5 percent of food-poisoning cases are recognized and reported. Nevertheless, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the number of cases in outbreaks of illness caused by

chicken rose three-fold between 1988 and 1992 (the most recent year for which data are available).

Salmonella bacteria were usually the culprit in those outbreaks, but today even more people

are sickened by another bug that has made headlines lately—campylobacter. (A third chicken-related bug in the news, avian flu, appears to be spread by live chickens, and only in Hong Kong to date.)

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Last December, the Clinton administration indicated it plans to propose an additional \$71 million for federal food-safety programs in the next budget. Meanwhile, a new inspection system for raw poultry and meat is taking effect. Federal inspectors will continue to look at each carcass inside the nation's 6,200 slaughtering plants, but their examination will be supplemented by safeguards put into place by employees of the plants themselves. In addition, some poultry and meat will be pulled off the production line and tested for bacterial contaminants.

The new system should make chicken safer, if it's properly enforced. Still, it has flaws. The most serious: It doesn't require tests for campylobacter.

As the push for food safety picks up steam, how safe is America's chicken? This special report—the result of an investigation that involved what we believe to be the most comprehensive microbiological analysis of store-bought chicken ever published in the U.S.—explores that question.

Like most Americans, Joseph O'Neill, 64, of Princeton, N.J., had heard for years that raw chicken harbors salmonella. He knew that chicken must be thoroughly cooked and that whatever

touches raw meat must be cleaned. "When I cook, I wash my hands after opening a package of chicken. And when I put it in the frying pan, I wash my hands again," says the former scholar in residence at the Carnegie Foundation. "I don't eat undercooked chicken—not knowingly, anyway."

But he suspects it was undercooked chicken in a sandwich he bought three years ago that led to an illness whose symptoms began with a mild gastrointestinal problem and within days left him paralyzed from shoulders to toes. It would take five weeks of physical therapy for him to walk again and nearly a year for him to recover fully.

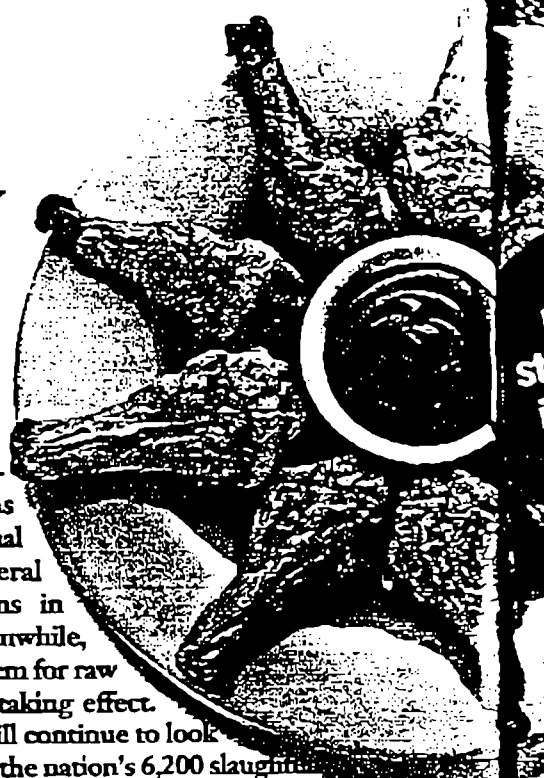
Lab tests indicated O'Neill was stricken by a microbe most people have never heard of and fewer can pronounce: *Campylobacter jejuni*

(Cam-pi-low-BAC-ter je-JOO-nee). The rod-shaped, whip-tailed bacterium, found mainly in raw chicken, has risen from obscurity (it wasn't recognized as a human pathogen until 1977) and squiggled past salmonella and through food safeguards to establish itself as the leading cause of food poisoning nationwide. Public-health officials estimate that the bug is responsible for 1.1 million to 7 million foodborne infections and 110 to 1,000 deaths per year. (By comparison, foodborne salmonella sickens some 700,000 to 4 million people, though it's deadlier, killing up to 2,000.)

Most campylobacter victims recover from the usual symptoms, fever and diarrhea, in about a week. However, some 20 percent suffer prolonged illness. Up to 10 percent are stricken



Joseph O'Neill, stricken by bacteria found in chicken.



In the largest published study of store-bought chickens in the U.S., we found harmful bacteria in 71 percent.

by serious, chronic complications, including meningitis, arthritis, and Guillain-Barré syndrome, the potentially fatal condition that leveled O'Neill. There's more bad news: Researchers say certain strains of campylobacter have become resistant to one of the major antibiotics doctors use to treat infected patients—at least partly because the poultry industry uses the same drug on chickens.

Recent media reports have sent mixed messages about the extent of bacterial contamination. Last October 20, a front-page story in *The New York Times* noted that as many as 90 percent of chickens harbor campylobacter. Less than two months later, the paper reported "surprisingly low" levels of contamination. The basis for its second conclusion: a sample of about 50 broilers, bought one day in Manhattan, that the *Times* had tested for salmonella (none were contaminated); and a sample of 10 tested for campylobacter (4 were contaminated).

Food columnist Marian Burros, who wrote both stories, told us the newspaper's samples were probably too small to provide statistically reliable results and that the chicken might not have been bought in

enough locations or over a long enough time. Still, she concluded that "while there are a lot of serious outbreaks—and they are serious—basically the American food supply is pretty safe."

Dirty birds

For our own study, we bought almost 1,000 fresh, whole chickens at grocery stores in 36 cities over a five-week period last fall. Our shoppers packed the birds in coolers and shipped them overnight to a lab. There, tests determined whether salmonella and campylobacter were present and measured the total plate count, an indicator of spoilage, and generic *Escherichia coli* bacteria. Although generic *E. coli* rarely causes disease (unlike its sometimes lethal cousin *E. coli* O157:H7, found primarily in cattle), it's an indicator of fecal contamination. Feces may contain microbes that *do* cause disease.

Included in our sample were chickens from four leading brands—*Perdue*, *Tyson Holly Farms*, *Foster Farms*, and *Country Pride*—seven supermarket brands, several premium brands, and a kosher brand. We also had our trained tasters evaluate nine brands of fresh split chicken breast for flavor, aroma, and texture. Key findings:

- We found campylobacter in 63 percent of the chickens, salmonella in 16 percent. Eight percent of all chickens had campylobacter *and* salmonella. Only 29 percent were free of both.
 - No brand was cleaner than others across the board.
 - As a group, "premium" chickens—from expensive, small brands and including free-range birds—were most contaminated.
 - Despite their reputation and price, our free-range birds tasted no better than other types. And the "range" may look nothing like the Ponderosa.
- Results are detailed below. Specifics on the amount of contamination in various brands of chicken are in the chart on page 18.

Campylobacter and salmonella. As a group, our 69 chickens from premium brands (*Bell & Evans*, *Green*

Pastures, *Rocky Junior*, and *Wellington Farms Free Range*) were most likely to harbor microbes. Not only do they tend to be costly, some companies boast about how the birds were raised. The "secret" to *Rocky Junior's* taste and quality, according to promotional material, is "vegetarian feed with no antibiotics, no animal by-products and no additives, as well as humane, stress-reducing, outdoor growing methods."

Of the premium birds, 70 percent were contaminated with campylobacter. Though its sample size was somewhat small, the worst offender was none other than *Rocky Junior*. However, since our samples from that brand were wrapped only when we bought them, they could have become contaminated in the store. Overall, 53 percent of the premium chickens harbored salmonella.

If salmonella and campylobacter had hitched a ride on the same carcass, at least consumers would know what *not* to buy, but the presence of the two bugs didn't track. Of the four major brands, for example, *Foster Farms* chickens were least likely to have salmonella—and most likely to have campylobacter.

Total plate count (how fresh?).

One in 20 birds were nearly spoiled, and even a fresh bird is not necessarily free of disease-causing bacteria.

***E. coli* (how dirty?).**

Some generic *E. coli* is present on virtually every chicken on the market, but the average levels we found were almost always low.

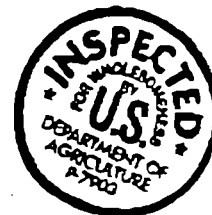
Taste. Chickens from all nine brands tasted

OK, but there were enough differences overall among brands that we could call out some as slightly better or worse than others. That said, the variations our tasters noted were often as great within a single brand as among the brands. (See "Do Free-Range Chickens Taste Better?" on page 14.)

The extent of microbiological contamination we found is disappointing, but it's not surprising. On average, our levels are slightly below those the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) found in 1994 and 1995, when it tested some 1,300 broilers from chicken processors nationwide. In that "baseline" study, 88 percent of

Continued on page 16

How wholesome?
The U.S. Department of Agriculture seal, which certifies a chicken as free from visible signs of disease, is no guarantee of cleanliness.



Home, home on the . . . small patch of dirt

Do free-range chickens taste better?

Free-range chickens are often touted as more flavorful and fresher-tasting than others, but are they? Not necessarily, to judge by our taste tests. Of the nine brands we tried, the two free-range brands, *Wellington Farms* and *D'Artagnan*, produced chickens that tasted only average. Details are in the chart at right.

Their prices, on the other hand, are anything but average. Split breasts from free-range birds can cost more than \$6 per pound—roughly \$4 more than the rest of the pack in the supermarket case. Why the surcharge? The chickens at Eberly Poultry Farms, some of which are sold as *D'Artagnan Free Range*, get a particularly expensive feed certified as organic. *Wellington Farms Free Range* chickens, says company general manager George Oppenheimer, are expensive because of their breed, which takes longer to mature than others.

Limited range

What does "free range" mean? In the early 1980s, when New York restaurateurs began using the term, it described chickens raised on small, local farms. Nowadays, the USDA requires only that growers sign an affidavit that they will provide free-range chickens with access to the outdoors, and submit drawings or photographs with arrows pointing to the coops' doors. Says Oppenheimer, "If the door was open only one day . . . or maybe even for an hour or 15 minutes, and no bird chose to go outside, it's still free-range as far as the USDA is concerned."

To see a range firsthand, our reporter traveled to Kreamer,

Pa., site of a Wellington Farms chicken house holding 23,000 birds. Their "range" was a penned, 10x30-foot patch of dirt topped with what a Wellington associate identified as chicken manure and some grass. Although an Eberly Poultry Farms chicken house we visited had a far larger pen, the birds chose to stay in a small area filled with weeds and an old drum. It was a sunny morning, and about 50 chickens out of 5,000 were pecking and scratching in the dirt. "This improves the flavor?" our reporter asked. "Yeah," said company president Bob Eberly. "They move around, and we can get the price we're asking, so obviously there must be something right with the chicken."

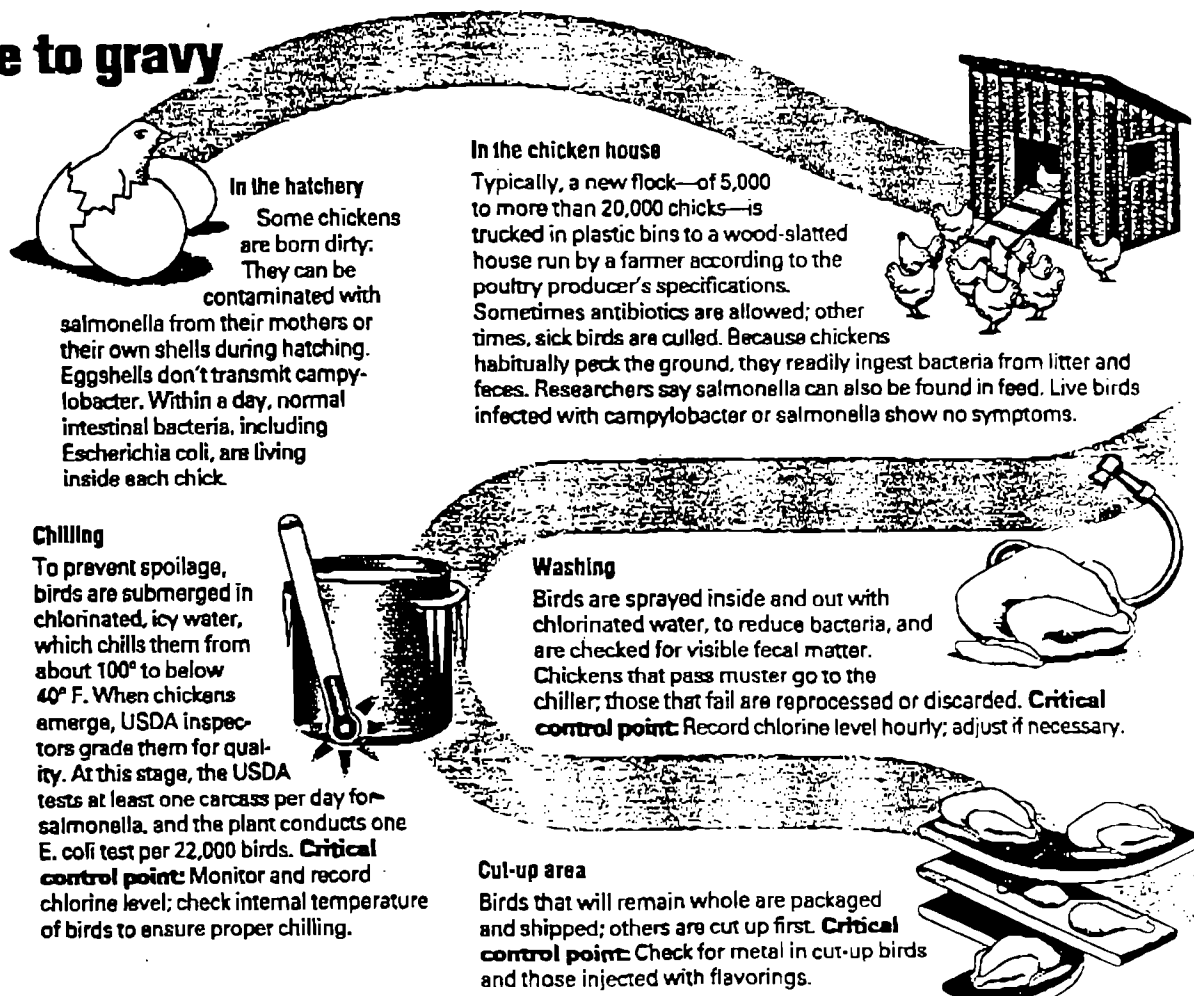
The nature of the bird

Oppenheimer is frank about what he calls "the myth" of free-range birds: "It's not the chickens' nature that if you give them a 15-acre pasture they're going to gallop and jump and roll over." Food and water are inside the chicken house, he notes; most chickens simply won't go outside, whatever the weather.

In fact, Oppenheimer says, free-ranging a bird—even in the true sense—probably detracts from its taste at the table. "If you have a lousy breed and you give it lousy feed, and you put it out someplace where it's going to peck off the ground and scavenge, you're going to have a tough bird that you really wouldn't want to eat." Oppenheimer says the main reason he climbed aboard the free-range bandwagon was to differentiate his chickens from the rest of the pack.

From cradle to gravy

This diagram shows stages in the processing of a chicken destined to be dinner. Procedures include those implemented in accordance with the government's new food-safety rules, which require companies to identify "critical control points" at which food contamination can occur, establish procedures for eliminating or reducing those hazards, and record the steps taken. Each plant's plan is likely to differ; the plan at right is one possibility.



*Clucking brancos?
This Amish free-
range farm wasn't
fenced in like many
others. Still, birds
were loath to roam.*

Faux free-range

If it's not worth paying more for free-range chickens, it's certainly not worth paying more for chickens that seem so but aren't.

How about *Murray's* chicken, from a company called Murray's Free Roaming? It's not free-range, says company president Steve Gold. "No one has said a word about it until you said something," he told our reporter. "We're not intending to mislead anybody." We asked Gold why the Web page of Dean & DeLuca, a New York-based fancy-foods store, described a 3½-pound Murray's chicken as "Hormone free and a step beyond free range. . . . The birds are allowed to 'roam' freely and forage on plants." Not only are Murray's not foraging on plants, but hormones are never used on chickens in the U.S. "I hadn't seen that one," Gold said. He and Dean & DeLuca promised to investigate. Last time we spoke to him, he said he was in the process of changing the company's name to Murray's Chickens.

► Tastes just like chicken

Each taster sampled 12 split breasts from each brand. Chickens were bought in the New York area. Comments reflect the average of all samples. Differences among brands were generally slight, yet they were clear enough that we could separate brands into three categories. Within each category, brands are listed alphabetically. Prices are the average we paid locally.

Product	Price	Comments
Better than average		
Bell & Evans	\$3.30/lb.	A bit fresher-tasting; a bit juicier than most.
The Natural	2.25	A bit fresher-tasting.
Average		
D'Artagnan Free Range	6.30	A bit juicier than most, quite tender, sometimes a little soft and pasty.
Murray's	3.25	Not quite as fresh-tasting; a bit juicier than most.
Tyson Holly Farms	2.20	A bit drier and chewier than most; somewhat more consistent quality.
Wellington Farms Free Range	3.40	Quite tender, sometimes a little soft and pasty.
Worse than average		
Perdue	2.65	Not quite as fresh-tasting.
ShopRite	1.85	Not quite as fresh-tasting, off-notes; a bit chewier than most.
Stop & Shop White Gem	1.80	Not quite as fresh-tasting, off-notes; a bit chewier than most.

On the road

Chickens travel to the processing plant in stacked, tightly packed crates. Dirt—and contamination—can spread.

USDA "poke and sniff" inspection

A plant employee or machine removes internal organs. The carcass and viscera go to a USDA inspector, who checks them for tumors, bruises, and other defects.

In the processing plant

Birds are first stunned, killed, and bled.

Defeathering

A machine's rubber fingers rotate or beat at high speed to pluck out feathers. This action can spread contamination and can push bacteria into skin crevices, making subsequent rinsing less effective.

Scalding

Hot water loosens feathers for easier plucking. Some bacteria on feathers, feet, and skin are killed or float away in overflow water, but others simply float from one bird to another. **Critical control point:** Check water temperature; be sure overflow is sufficient.

On your table

What you don't cook can hurt you. But thorough cooking—and washing anything that comes in contact with raw chicken—will greatly reduce the risk.

On the road again

Once packaged chickens leave the plant, they're beyond USDA jurisdiction. Temperature fluctuations and delays during transport go largely unpoliced, except perhaps by local health departments during routine inspections.

In the store

Improper temperatures or handling can make bacteria multiply.

the chickens had campylobacter; 20 percent had salmonella. *E. coli* levels were similar to ours. Only total plate count, the indicator of spoilage, was lower in the government study.

The USDA plucked its chickens off the processing line rather than buying them from stores as we did (and as a consumer would do), so its results depict a different stage of the process. Some of our birds might have been subjected to freezing temperatures, which could have killed some microbes. Time or warmth contributed to the decrease in freshness we found.

Setting standards

Between 1907 and 1997, USDA procedures for inspecting meat and poultry in processing plants remained

largely unchanged. Inspectors judged abnormalities and contamination on the basis of what they saw, felt, and smelled as carcasses rattled past on a chain or conveyor belt.

In January 1997, the USDA began the first of several enhancements to "poke and sniff" inspection. Taken together, these measures are termed the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point/Pathogen Reduction Rule (commonly called HACCP, thank goodness, and pronounced HASS-up). Under the new system, USDA inspectors will still sit on the line, but plant managers will bear more of the burden.

The system's first requirement was that plants establish "sanitation standard operating procedures" designed to ensure cleanliness—at day's end, an

employee will clean walls and floors, for example. At the same time, slaughtering plants started testing for generic *E. coli*. As a rule, they must conduct one test per 22,000 chickens, with at least one test per week. Contamination limits are specified, yet the USDA won't take regulatory action—such as citing a plant for violations—based solely on *E. coli* test results. Instead, inspectors might ask plant managers to review their procedures.

In May 1997, the USDA set a "zero tolerance" level for visible fecal matter on raw chicken. Under USDA supervision, poultry plants are responsible for checking for feces. Dirty birds can be rinsed off.

On January 26, 1998, the USDA began to implement the final stage of

WORKING CONDITIONS

Trouble on the line

Every day, the typical worker on a poultry-processing line may make a single movement up to 20,000 times—the same chop of a knife to cut a carcass into pieces, the same twist of the wrist to pull off the skin. Such repetitive motions cause poultry workers to suffer disorders to the hand, wrist, arm, and shoulder at rates 16 times the national average for private industry, according to the latest statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor. Nearly 18 percent of the 240,600 poultry workers reported work-related injuries and illnesses in 1996. Of those, nearly one-third involved repetitive-stress injuries.

The injuries—from tendinitis to carpal tunnel syndrome—seem to be directly related to a dramatic increase in the speed of the processing line since 1979. Before that time, workers cut, cropped, or skinned 70 carcasses per minute; today, they handle up to 91. In a regulatory catch-22, line-speed limits are set not by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) but by the U.S. Department of Agriculture—the agency whose dual role includes safeguarding the food supply and supporting agriculture. Typically, OSHA steps in only when workers complain about conditions.

From October 1995 through September 1996, OSHA stepped into poultry plants 41 times, issuing 416 citations for such safety-related problems as noise, air contaminants, and structural and electrical hazards. For example, last July, in response to a union representative's complaints, OSHA cited a Missouri plant then owned by Hudson Foods Inc. for allegedly denying workers sufficient access to bathrooms. And last December, the agency proposed penalties totaling

\$840,000 against the same plant for "alleged willful safety and health violations involving ergonomic hazards." Tyson Foods, which acquired the plant in January, is contesting the citations.

Poultry-industry workers have complained of rewards if they do not report a work-related injury or illness. Richard Lobb, a spokesperson for the National Broiler Council, the major industry group, says such programs were meant to raise awareness about safety, not to lower the rate of injury reports. But because of the "possibility of misunderstanding,"

he added, those programs are "a thing of the past."

Debbie Berkowitz, director of safety and health for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, which represents the 25 percent of poultry workers who are union members, listed other complaints: an unsafe maximum line speed, insufficient protection from preventable injuries, inadequately staffed on-site medical services, and a lack of follow-up care. Poultry plants could improve conditions, she said, by giving workers regular breaks, slowing line speeds (or adding workers so each could work at a safer pace), upgrading tools and equipment, and paying closer attention to such basic hazards as slippery floors.

At press time, still other issues related to working conditions were being addressed. The Department of Labor, OSHA's parent, was analyzing results of a 1997 survey of the poultry industry's adherence to workplace laws. The survey, based on a sampling of 51 plants, is expected to focus on recruitment practices, including promises of housing and transportation, and compliance with wage-and-hour laws.



the new inspection system. It requires plant managers to:

- identify places where biological, chemical, or physical hazards can occur;
- establish controls to prevent or reduce those hazards;
- monitor to make sure the controls are working;
- fix the problem if the controls aren't working; and
- document their monitoring and any remedies taken.

The largest chicken plants had to have a monitoring plan in place on January 26; smaller plants have until 1999 or 2000. The USDA will verify and monitor each plant's plan.

Also on January 26, the USDA was to start testing for salmonella—but not campylobacter—in slaughtering and processing plants. How often it tests will depend on a plant's past performance, but at least one carcass will be tested per day. Instead of requiring the dirtiest plants to match the performance of the cleanest, the USDA made a concession to practicality: It took the average contamination from its baseline study and made that the limit. Ongoing testing will have to indicate that no more than 20 percent of a plant's chickens have salmonella. The amount of salmonella in a chicken isn't tested for. There's no consensus about what amount may cause illness. Age, HIV infection, and stress can reduce the immune system's ability to prevent a few bacteria from blooming into billions.

Testing for salmonella can take several days, so the system's goal isn't to discard dirty chickens but to make sure controls are working properly. If too many birds harbor salmonella, the plant must take action—by adjusting the amount of chlorine in rinse water, for instance. (See "From Cradle to Gravy," page 14.) If plant managers fail to take such steps or if contamination levels remain significantly above the limit anyway, the USDA can close the plant.

The new procedures were a long time coming, perhaps because the USDA is assigned a dual role, as not only defender of food safety but promoter of food production. The agency's relationship with the poultry industry made news during the tenure of former Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy. Espy resigned in 1994, in the face of a special counsel's investigation into whether he accepted favors from the industry. Last December, chicken giant

Tyson Foods admitted it had made more than \$12,000 in illegal gifts to Espy, whose trial is slated to begin March 30. Espy says he's innocent.

If it sometimes seemed that a fox was guarding the hen house, that may no longer be the case. Current Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman has pressed for passage of the Food Safety Enforcement Enhancement Act, which would let the government order companies to recall unsafe or tainted products (now, recalls are voluntary) and impose fines. Debate on the bill is expected this year.

To make meat safer

Thorough cooking kills off all bacterial contaminants. Why worry about inspection; why not teach consumers, then let them fend for themselves?

First, any cook can slip up occasionally. Even if you trust your own skills, you might be ambushed by an improperly cooked chicken at a restaurant or backyard barbecue. Second,

cooking a chicken to the proper temperature is only half the battle. Cooks also have to be careful not to infect themselves or other foods via contaminated implements, pans, cutting boards, kitchen towels, and sponges.

So although the modernization of the meat-inspection process may be a milestone, as Agriculture Secretary Glickman has said, we think there's still plenty of room for improvement. Among the measures that would make for cleaner chickens:

Test for campylobacter. Tom Bily, administrator of the USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service, says such tests are too expensive. But given the number of illnesses and deaths campylobacter causes, a standard—backed up by tests—should be mandatory.

Lower the salmonella limit. If as few as 4 percent of birds from one plant are contaminated, as we found, all plants should be able to do better than the USDA's 20 percent standard.

Tighten enforcement. Maintain

Bird words

Kosher This word may be used only on the labels of meat and poultry products prepared according to Jewish dietary laws. Salt is added as part of the process. The kosher chicken our tasters tried, from *Empire*, tasted saltier and more moist than the others we tried and had a bit of the flavor and texture of cured meat.

Natural Food labeled "natural" cannot contain artificial ingredients and has to be minimally processed. Whole, fresh, unseasoned chicken, therefore, is "natural." That term does not relate to how the chicken was fed, raised, slaughtered, handled, or packed.

Organic Last December, the USDA proposed a rule that would let raw meat be labeled "organic" if 80 percent of the animals' feed is organically grown, even if space and outdoor access are restricted. Antibiotics and other drugs could be used under certain circumstances.

Sell-by date No federal regulations require a date on packages of chicken or chicken products. However, many stores and processors put on a date voluntarily.

Fresh A chicken whose internal temperature has never been below 26° F, the approximate freezing temperature of chicken. Since water freezes at 32°, it is possible for a "fresh" chicken to appear icy.



Frozen A chicken whose internal temperature has been at or below zero. (Strange as it seems, chickens at temperatures between zero and 26° aren't officially "frozen"; no term applies to them.)

Irradiated In 1992, the USDA permitted irradiation of raw packaged poultry to control bacteria. As of now, relatively little chicken has been treated. Packages of irradiated chicken must carry the words "Treated with Irradiation."

Broiler-fryer A chicken about 7 weeks old that weighs roughly 2½ to 4½ pounds. It's the type we tested.

Roaster A chicken about 3 to 5 months old that weighs roughly 5 to 7 pounds. It yields more meat per pound than a broiler-fryer.

Another term the USDA allows, with sufficient documentation: "No antibiotics administered." As for "no hormones," any such label also has to say that no hormones have been approved for use in poultry.

enough USDA inspectors, and pass the Food Safety Enforcement Enhancement Act so the government can order recalls and levy fines.

Use checkpoints outside plants. Encourage the implementation of critical control points at farms, supermarkets, and restaurants. The USDA has no authority over those venues, but last November, in a promising development, investigators from the agency began taking samples from hatcheries, feed bins, even farmers' boots, in the hope of supplying poultry producers with new ways to control bacterial risks. The USDA has also held meetings to discuss food-safety programs for retailers.

Limit the use of antibiotics. Low doses of antibiotics are sometimes added to feed, to help birds grow faster. Sick chickens are treated, too. But in a study, yet-to-be-published, Michael Osterholm, an epidemiologist at the Minnesota Health Department, will report that the use of certain antibiotics has backfired. Of 91 chickens bought at retail, about 25 percent of those infected with campylobacter had a strain of the bug resistant to fluoroquinolones, antibiotics used to treat both ailing chickens and people sickened by campylobacter. Poultry-industry spokespeople dispute his findings.

Antibiotic-resistant salmonella has been linked to eating beef, chicken, and other meats in England. U.S. poultry is so far unaffected. But U.S. public-health officials are keeping watch.

Change chilling. In most plants, birds are submerged in a tank of icy,

often chlorinated, water, which can kill some microbes but spread those that stay alive. Moreover, the soaking carcasses gain up to 8 percent of their weight in water, which consumers pay for as if it were meat. This gain is legal, though several red-meat producers (who can't add water) sued the USDA over it. Any change in the rules will take several months.

Other possibilities. A salmonella vaccine for chickens (which in turn will prevent illness in humans) awaits USDA approval. Eventually, it may be possible to vaccinate chickens—or humans—against campylobacter.

Yet Osterholm of the Minnesota Health Department thinks irradiation is the only way to get campylobacter out of chickens under all conditions. Irradiation, which kills bacteria, has long been approved for use on poultry, produce, and pork; more recently, it was approved for red meat. Today, only one irradiation plant is treating poultry, and the meat is going mainly to hotels, restaurants, and hospitals.

While it may be useful, irradiation isn't a panacea. It could lead to unwanted public-health and environmental side effects, and it's not clear that it's economically competitive with other alternatives. As former USDA official Carol Tucker Foreman puts it, irradiation is "not a substitute for taking proper sanitation measures in processing plants. After all, sterilized poop is still poop."

In some countries, Sweden among them, salmonella has been dramatically reduced in chicken, although campylobacter remains a problem. One way Sweden controls outbreaks is to slaughter infected flocks—perhaps not practical in the U.S. Still, some measures used abroad would require only modest changes here and would likely add just pennies per pound to the price of chicken.

That's a price consumers should be willing to pay, says Martin Blaser, director of the division of infectious diseases at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine: "You think our food is inexpensive? Nobody is really factoring in the cost of foodborne disease. If you add lost wages, and lost school days and health-care costs and even some deaths, you'll find that our

food is not as cheap as it appears to be." Government estimates of the annual cost of illnesses caused by foodborne salmonella and campylobacter are as high as \$3.5 billion and \$5.6 billion, respectively.

Recommendations

As you stand before the poultry case, realize that any chicken you buy is likely to harbor some contaminants, and that no particular brand is likely to taste better than another time after time. You can buy the least expensive chicken available. But because you are the last line of defense in protecting yourself and others from unsafe food, take these precautions:

- Pick chicken that is well-wrapped and at the bottom of the case, where the temperature should be coolest. Make sure the sell-by date is days away. To keep the chicken's juices from leaking onto other groceries, place it in a plastic bag like those in the produce department. Make chicken one of your last purchases.

- If you'll be cooking the chicken within a couple of days, store it in a refrigerator whose temperature is below 40° F. Otherwise, freeze it.

- Thaw chicken in a refrigerator or microwave oven, never on a counter.

- Separate raw chicken from other foods. Immediately after preparation, use hot, soapy water and paper towels to wash and dry your hands along with anything you or raw chicken might have touched. Toss dirty sponges in the dishwasher.

Stopping the spread of contamination is crucial. University of Arizona researchers who monitored bacteria levels in the kitchens and bathrooms of 15 homes for 10 weeks found the highest concentrations of fecal contamination in the kitchen; the toilet seat was cleaner. The germs' source? Mainly raw chicken and other meats, says lead investigator Charles Gerba.

- Cook whole chicken to 180° F (cook breasts to 170°). Don't return cooked meat to the plate that held it raw. And don't use a sauce in which raw chicken has been marinating unless it has been brought to a rolling boil for at least a minute.

- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours of cooking. ①

How contaminated?

Below, the percent of chickens we tested that harbored the two major disease-causing bacteria. For each of the major brands, we analyzed about 200 chickens; for supermarket brands, a total of 100; for premium brands, 69; for *Empire Kosher*, 30. Brands are in alphabetical order. Price is the average we paid nationwide.

Brand or category	Price	Salmonella	Campylobacter
Country Pride	\$0.90/lb.	13%	54%
Empire Kosher	2.35	40	30
Foster Farms	1.10	4	77
Perdue	1.15	20	62
Tyson Holly Farms	0.85	13	62
Premium ①	1.85	53	70
Supermarket ②	1.10	7	67

① Bell & Evans, Green Pastures, Rocky Junior, Wellington Farms Free Range
② Dominick's, Jewel, Palmhart, Price Chopper, Publix, Safeway, Stop & White Gern

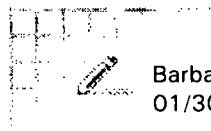


Mary L. Smith
01/30/98 07:22:59 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Thomas L. Freedman/OPD/EOP
cc:
Subject: Food Safety Option - Feb. 9

----- Forwarded by Mary L. Smith/OPD/EOP on 01/30/98 07:28 PM -----



Barbara D. Woolley
01/30/98 07:21:34 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Mary L. Smith/OPD/EOP
cc:
Subject: Food Safety Option - Feb. 9

FYI. Can you check with Elena also.

----- Forwarded by Barbara D. Woolley/WHO/EOP on 01/30/98 07:07 PM -----



Toby Donenfeld @ OVP
01/30/98 06:23:40 PM



Record Type: Record

To: Patricia M. Ewing/OVP @ OVP, Kimberly H Tilley/OVP @ OVP, Ansley Jones/OVP @ OVP
cc:
Subject: Food Safety Option - Feb. 9

I've asked Barbara Woolley in OPL and Patrick Steel at USDA to give us a recommendation on whether or not it makes sense for the VP to do an event on Feb. 9 on the food safety initiative in the budget. As you know, the food safety numbers were leaked to the press in late December and will obviously be part of the budget the Pres. releases on Monday Feb. 2. I just want to make sure that the VP will still be able to have a good event that will generate news.

Barbara is checking w/ the consumer groups and other who were going to brief the Hill on the budget to see if they can or want to hold off until after a possible VP event on Feb. 9. Patrick is checking on how much press he thinks can be generated on Feb. 9 for this initiative.

I'll let you know what I hear on Monday.



Mary L. Smith
01/30/98 07:40:09 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Thomas L. Freedman/OPD/EOP, Anil Kakani/OMB/EOP, Matthew McKearn/OMB/EOP

cc: Essence P. Washington/OPD/EOP

Subject: Meeting on Targeting Hungry Children

There will be a meeting to propose initiatives to target hungry children at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, February 3 in Room 211. Edward Cooney, Dorothy Caldwell, and Julie Paradis from USDA will present some ideas that they have come up with. Thanks, Mary



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Telephone (202) 720-3631 Fax (202) 720-5437

Radio address
Food Safety
GW

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MESSAGE: FRT - This is on our enforcement
legislation. Will send options soon.

Like our charts?

CSPI

CENTER
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Publisher of **Nutrition Action Healthletter**

MEDIA ADVISORY

Capitol Hill Press Conference

Wednesday, February 4, 1998

Recipe for Safe Food Campaign Launched; Consumers Urge Congress to Clean Up America's Food Supply

- WHAT:** Press Conference- CSPI, together with the Safe Food Coalition, will launch the *Recipe for Safe Food - A Campaign to Clean Up America's Food Supply*. This campaign will enlist millions of consumers to support Congressional action to improve the safety of the food supply. The press conference will discuss several bills to improve USDA's and FDA's enforcement tools, including S. 1264 and HR 3070.
- WHEN:** Wednesday, February 4, 1998, at 11:00 a.m.
- WHERE:** Room 328A, Senate Agriculture Committee, Russell Senate Office Building
- WHO:** U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)
U.S. Representative Frank Pallone (D-NJ)
Caroline Smith DeWaal, Center for Science in the Public Interest, on behalf of Safe Food Coalition member organizations.
- CONTACT:** Patrick Dorton or Jennifer Frost at (202)224-3254, or Penelope Miller (202) 332-9110, ext. 358.
- VISUALS:** *Recipe for Safe Food* Logo
Charts with food poisoning data
- EMBARGO:** This advisory is strictly for planning purposes only. All information is strictly embargoed until the time of the press conference.

1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. / Suite 300 / Washington, DC 20009-5728 / (202) 332-9110 / FAX (202) 265-4954

To Protect Consumers, the Government Can Order the Recall of -

Baby swings	YES
Infant formula	YES
Seat belts	YES
Coffee makers	YES
Juice extractors	YES
Cribs	YES
Toys	YES
Automobiles	YES
Gasoline	YES
Insecticides	YES
Meat	NO
Poultry	NO

USDA Can Use Fines To Stop Which of the Following Offenses?

Circuses mistreating elephants	YES
Dealers buying or selling dogs and cats without a license	YES
Incorrect weighing of and accounting for livestock by packers	YES
A dealer selling undersized potatoes	YES
A zoo's improper treatment of its animals	YES
Failing to file reports with the onion committee	YES
Exchanging food stamps for cash	YES
A handler's failure to keep appropriate records on watermelons	YES
Interstate movement of certain livestock without a health certificate	YES
Violating food safety laws and regulations	NO



United States
Department of
Agriculture

1999 National Food Safety Initiative



From: USDA and
Services

*Food
Safety*

BACKGROUND

February 1998

On January 25, 1997, the President announced the National Food Safety Initiative. The initiative includes components for reducing the incidence of foodborne illness from farm-to-table. Key components include expansion of the Federal food safety surveillance system, improved coordination between Federal, State, and local health authorities, improved risk assessment capabilities, increased inspection, expanded research, consumer education, and strategic planning. Utilizing the funds provided by Congress in 1998, an increase of \$42.8 million, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have initiated changes to ensure the safety of a wider variety of food products from a broader range of hazards. In addition, USDA and HHS have identified measures that need to be taken to ensure the safety of fresh fruits and vegetables consistent with the President's directive on this issue. USDA, HHS, and other interested parties will seek input on measures that can be taken to improve food safety during production, transportation, storage, distribution, and in the home.

1999 Budget Request:

For 1999, the Administration is proposing an increase of \$100.6 million for the National Food Safety Initiative. Of this amount, \$45.6 million is allocated to USDA and \$55 million to HHS. The 1999 National Food Safety Initiative builds on the successes of the 1998 initiative as well as fills the gaps that have been identified in the past year. In 1999, the focus of the initiative is on enhancing the safety of imported and domestic fruits and vegetables, targeting food safety education, implementing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems in appropriate sectors of the food supply, and developing scientific information and tools to control a greater range of food safety hazards. Funding is requested for the following activities:

Enhance surveillance and investigation to improve outbreak response (+\$7.0 million):

HHS (+\$6.7 million): The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will work with States to identify potential food safety threats early. CDC and FDA will further build the capabilities and coverage of the FoodNet early-warning surveillance system and will improve monitoring of threats to food by expanding the range of pathogens under surveillance. The agencies also will improve information sharing among agencies and with the public, and provide training and technical assistance to State/local agencies for outbreak investigation.

USDA (+\$0.3 million): The Economic Research Service (ERS) will evaluate the effectiveness of food safety measures by analyzing foodborne illness surveillance data. New estimates will be developed for the national incidence of foodborne disease, distribution of illness among subpopulations, and rates of illness.

Strengthen coordination and improve efficiency (+\$0.2 million):

HHS (+\$0.2 million): HHS will ensure quick and accurate detection and coordination of foodborne illness outbreaks and evaluation of responses. The agencies will improve information and data sharing among the agencies at Federal, State, and local levels.

Improve the capability to estimate risks associated with foodborne hazards (+\$11.1 million):

HHS (+\$7.2 million): FDA will initiate a program of research in quantitative risk assessment (particularly for microbial hazards) that is targeted to address the limitations in risk assessment methodologies and available data related to 1) dose-response relations for the general population and high risk groups (e.g. neonates, elderly, immune-compromised), 2) the impact of production, processing, distribution, marketing, and preparation practices, and 3) the quantification of factors contributing to incidence and prevalence of pathogenic microorganisms in raw ingredients and finished products. FDA will continue to build the activities of the interagency Risk Assessment Consortium at JIFSAN that provides a forum for coordination of federal microbial risk assessment research and as clearinghouse for risk assessment information and expertise.

USDA (+\$3.9 million): The Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES), ERS, FSIS, and the Office of the Chief Economist (OCE) will conduct quantitative risk assessments to identify food safety hazards and controls, make faster and more accurate regulatory decisions, target more effectively program resources, and facilitate the development and evaluation of surveillance plans and risk reduction strategies.

Expand inspection and compliance efforts, implement new preventive measures with a new emphasis on produce and imports, and facilitate the implementation of HACCP (+\$35.4 million):

HHS (+\$27.6 million): FDA will protect American consumers by seeking legislation that would prevent the import of unsafe food products from countries with food safety systems that are not on a par with the U.S. system or that refuse to allow entry of U.S. inspectors into facilities producing products offered for import. FDA will verify implementation of seafood HACCP and implement HACCP for juices. FDA will provide technical assistance and educational outreach to promote the adoption of voluntary GAP/GMP guidance in the domestic fresh produce industry.

USDA (+\$7.8 million): The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) will provide special onetime assistance to State meat and poultry inspection programs to facilitate implementation of HACCP.

Continue to build the national food safety education campaign (+\$13.6 million):

USDA (+\$9.5 million) and HHS (+\$4.1 million) for the following activities:

Consumer and Food Handler Education-USDA (+\$4.7 million) and HHS (+\$4.1 million): Building on the national campaign launched by the public-private Partnership for Food Safety Education in 1997, FSIS, CSREES and FDA will target specific programs to change unsafe behaviors used by home food handlers, cooks and food handlers in retail settings and in congregate

From: USDA
feeding sites. CDC, FSIS and FDA will begin development of materials to assist in educating school children about how to prevent foodborne illness. FDA will target vulnerable groups (e.g., those affected by *Vibrio* in raw oysters and pregnant women and *Listeria*) with specific food safety messages. FDA will develop multilingual training programs for food service and retail workers and provide technical assistance to domestic and foreign fresh produce industries to promote adoption of good agricultural and manufacturing guidance. FSIS will target vulnerable groups (e.g., senior citizens and people with compromised immune systems) and will launch a campaign to promote thorough cooking of meat and poultry products.

School Food Service Provider Education-USDA (+\$2.0 million): The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will develop and operate training workshops to educate local school food service professionals about the latest safe food handling practices specific to their needs and the updated Food Code.

Producer Education-USDA (+\$2.8 million): FSIS and CSREES will work with industry and academia to educate food animal producers and fruit and vegetable producers on food safety assurance practices, risk management, and risk communication.

Accelerate food safety research efforts (+\$33.3 million):

USDA (+\$24.1 million) for the following activities:

Basic Research (+\$1.3 million): Research will be conducted to enhance the understanding of pathogen growth and control;

Applied Research (+\$13.8 million): Alternative food production, processing, and handling systems that eliminate or reduce pathogen contamination will be designed and evaluated. Conditions under which food products become contaminated during food handling, distribution, and storage will be identified; and,

Methods Development (+\$2.7 million): Rapid tests will be developed that identify a broader range of pathogens on food products, specifically fruits and vegetables, throughout the food production, manufacturing and distribution system;

Baseline Studies (+\$6.3 million): A microbiological baseline for pathogens on fruits and vegetables will be developed utilizing existing program infrastructure.

HHS (+\$9.2 million):

FDA will intensify research to prevent and respond to new food safety hazards, such as *E. coli* O157:H7, *Campylobacter*, *Cyclospora*, and *Salmonella Typhimurium* DT 104. FDA will focus research in the four areas identified in interagency research planning as critical to reducing microbial risk in produce: improved detection methods, resistance to traditional preservation techniques, antibiotic resistance, and development of prevention/intervention strategies.

FOOD SAFETY FROM FARM TO TABLE: A NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Consolidated, Multi-Agency Plan for Improving Food Safety

The fiscal year (FY) 1999 integrated food safety initiative budget presents a coordinated proposal of actions to enhance the safety of the Nation's food supply by building on the accomplishments that have begun to be realized in FY 1997 and will be furthered in FY 1998. The FY 1998 budget initiative brought much-needed new resources to enhance surveillance of foodborne disease outbreaks and better coordinate our response to outbreaks, improve inspections and compliance, target important new research and risk assessment to critical scientific gaps, and expand education and training especially to promote the use of safe food handling practices. The FY 1999 initiative will build on gains made in these areas, and place increased emphasis on ensuring the safety of domestic and imported fresh produce. Our experience of working together for the past year has also helped us identify new opportunities to avoid duplication of effort and to leverage agency resources.

The Administration, through a Presidential Directive issued on October 2, 1997, is taking additional actions to improve the safety of domestic and imported fresh fruits and vegetables. The President has proposed additional funds to enable the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to expand dramatically its coverage of imported foods and will continue to seek legislation that would enable FDA to prevent the import of fruits, vegetables, or other foods from any foreign country whose food safety systems are not on par with those of the United States. Additional funds are included in the budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and FDA for research that will enhance our understanding of pathogenic contamination on fruits and vegetables and lead to improved controls for ensuring the safety of these commodities. In addition, the President has directed the Secretaries of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and USDA to work together with the agricultural community to develop guidance on good manufacturing practices and good agricultural practices for fruits and vegetables as well as to accelerate food safety research, and provide education and outreach to domestic and foreign producers. FDA, working with USDA, undertook development of these guidelines and public outreach to the broad agricultural community with no new resources in FY 1998.

The impetus to focus increased Federal attention on food safety came from a number of sources. The most important of these sources is the rapidly increasing number and complexity of food safety issues (such as newly recognized pathogens and their sudden appearance on foods, such as fresh produce, where they had not been seen before). These trends, along with the increasing number of foodborne disease outbreaks, and increasing public concern, converged last year into an inescapable reality: without significant new resources, food safety agencies will not be able to

meet the challenges of the 21st century. Estimates cited in the report released by the Vice President in May 1997 are that every year from 6.5 million to 33 million Americans become ill and as many as 9,000 die as a result of foodborne pathogens. These illnesses and deaths are far too many. Our challenge is to continue to build the best food safety system possible and to reduce the burden of avoidable human suffering and economic loss to the greatest extent possible.

The FY 1998 Food Safety Initiative

The increase of \$42.8 million approved by Congress for FY 1998 to support the President's National Food Safety Initiative is the first installment of a major governmentwide effort to enhance the safety of the Nation's food supply. The initiative has won wide support among industry and consumer groups and the general public.

The FY 1998 Food Safety Initiative cited seven critical elements of a comprehensive and more effectively coordinated nationwide program required to improve the safety of the food supply and, thereby reduce the possibility that consumers will suffer the adverse health and economic consequences of foodborne infections. Key components of this interagency initiative included the following activities:

- Build enhanced "early warning" and surveillance systems to help detect and respond to foodborne illness outbreaks, and to provide the data needed to prevent future outbreaks.
- Achieve better coordination of interagency responses to foodborne disease outbreaks including electronic communication and data exchange among Federal, State, and local health authorities.
- Develop and implement inspection strategies that provide greater assurance of the safety of foods, including implementation of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and other food safety control systems, and enhanced inspection coverage of food processors and imported foods.
- Improve risk assessment methods for foodborne pathogens and develop data bases needed to help food safety agencies to better characterize the nature and size of risk to humans and make decisions on how to best allocate resources to control the hazards.
- Expand food safety education and training particularly for consumers and retail food service workers to acquaint them with safe food processing, storage, and handling techniques.
- Conduct research to develop more effective methods for detecting, controlling, and preventing foodborne hazards.
- Continue long-range strategic planning for improving the food safety system.

The FY 1999 Food Safety Initiative

The FY 1999 Food Safety Initiative further reflects the coordination between the Federal food safety agencies and builds on the key components identified in the FY 1998 initiative. A new focus is being placed on enhancing the safety of domestic and imported fruits and vegetables, facilitating the adoption of HACCP systems, improving the food handling practices of school food service providers, and develop information and tools necessary to cover a broader range of food safety hazards.

Surveillance

CDC, USDA, and FDA will continue to build the capabilities of the national early-warning surveillance system to help detect and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illness earlier, and will add new emphasis on training, technical assistance, and investigations.

Enhance surveillance and investigative systems: CDC and FDA will direct additional resources to FoodNet sites and other State and local health departments to improve outbreak investigations, to expand the range of pathogens under surveillance, to begin implementing and evaluating control strategies, and to facilitate intrastate, interstate, and State-Federal information sharing. In addition, CDC will enhance foodborne disease surveillance and control activities, including standardized molecular subtyping methods for bacterial foodborne pathogens.

Epidemiologic and technical studies of emerging and drug-resistant pathogens and other contaminants: FDA will work with CDC and USDA to monitor and reduce the incidence of foodborne disease associated with emerging and drug-resistant pathogens. CDC will initiate training and technical assistance to State and local health agencies to improve diagnostic capacity for foodborne diseases and to support development of better diagnostic assays for clinical specimens.

Improve and enhance workforce competency: CDC will provide four new Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officers to improve investigation of foodborne diseases, and will establish a training program in pathogen identification with an emphasis on new technologies aimed at a wide range of State Health Department professionals.

Coordination

Federal agencies and State representatives have formed an intergovernmental group, the Foodborne Outbreak Response Coordinating Group (FORCG), to evaluate and make recommendations for improving responses to interstate outbreaks of foodborne illness. This cooperative effort will be continued and expanded to provide rapid, efficient response to foodborne outbreaks and minimize their spread.

Expand assistance to State and local Governments: FDA, USDA and CDC will work with other Federal agencies to expand assistance to State and local Governments to develop the infrastructure necessary to ensure quick and accurate detection and coordination of response to outbreaks, and evaluation of those responses.

Inspections and Compliance

Monitoring the food supply to ensure its safety must occur at several levels to be effective: for example, Federal assessment of agricultural and production practices in foreign countries; Federal oversight of imported and domestic products in the United States; local oversight of food processing and manufacturing facilities, retail food, food service, and institutional establishments such as school lunch programs. FDA, USDA, CDC and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will build on and expand efforts already underway through the President's National Food Safety Initiative. These will include additional steps to ensure the safety of imported foods; development of good agricultural and good manufacturing guidance for produce; continued progress to implement HACCP for seafood, meat and poultry products; continued development of HACCP for appropriate sectors of the food industry; and additional progress toward development of partnerships among agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels.

Seek statutory authority to assure imported food safety: FDA is seeking statutory amendments to the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to enable the agency to assure that imported products are produced under systems that provide the same level of protection as the U.S. system.

Develop Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) Guidance: FDA will work with USDA and the agriculture community to develop and issue GAPs and GMPs to minimize microbial hazards in fresh produce.

Expand HACCP and HACCP training: FDA, working with USDA, and through industry partnerships, will expand HACCP in appropriate sectors of the food industry, such as implementing HACCP in the juice industry. USDA will provide HACCP training to State meat and poultry inspectors and provide special assistance to facilitate the transition of State programs to HACCP by 2000.

Develop assistance and outreach to State and local programs: FDA will work with USDA to expand efforts to achieve adoption of the Food Code.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment methods help characterize the nature and magnitude of risks to human health associated with foodborne hazards and assist regulators in making decisions about where in the food chain to allocate resources to control those hazards. Risk assessment also focuses data collection and scientific research in the most critical areas. Working together, the Federal agencies with food safety and risk assessment responsibilities will build on and expand efforts already underway through the National Food Safety Initiative announced in May 1997. Intensive work is needed to develop better risk assessment methods and models to make it possible to carry out quantitative risk assessments for microbial agents.

Develop and evaluate risk-based pathogen reduction strategies for food animal producers: USDA will evaluate science-based pathogen reduction systems that are compatible with HACCP-based inspection systems. Evaluate costs and benefits of alternative pathogen control strategies using risk assessment results.

Expand activities of the Risk Assessment Consortium: In FY 1997, FDA, USDA, and EPA established an interagency risk assessment consortium at the Joint Institute of Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at the University of Maryland. The goal of the consortium is to cooperatively advance the science of microbial risk assessment. The agencies will work to further focus critical research needs and reach consensus on the priorities of those needs based on their potential to reduce the uncertainty of risk management decisions.

Develop better data on human exposures to foodborne agents: FDA, CDC, USDA, and EPA will work together to conduct several risk assessment activities including food-consumption surveys targeted to specific subpopulations, development of more effective exposure modeling techniques, and development of better animal models for infectious microorganisms.

Develop better modeling techniques: FDA, USDA, and EPA will develop more effective modeling techniques for the growth, death and adaptation of foodborne and waterborne pathogens at all points from farm to table.

Education

Food safety education is an integral part of a successful, coordinated food safety program. In FY 1997, FDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Cooperative, State, Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), and CDC laid the foundation for a nationwide food safety education campaign, in a new public-private partnership with industry, consumer groups, and State representatives through the Association of Food and Drug Officials. The basis of the campaign is four key food safety messages based on research to be used by educators nationwide. In FY 1998, the agencies are focussing on consumers. The goal for FY 1999 is to develop

product-specific and audience-specific messages to address risks relevant to groups throughout the food chain.

Improve producer and distributor education: FDA and USDA will initiate communication about GAP and GMP guidance to appropriate audiences. USDA will continue coordination with States to educate producers, processors, and distributors on risk management, risk communication, and safety assurance.

Improve retailer and food service worker education: USDA will provide education to local school food service professionals based on the Food Code (a 1999 revision is planned). FDA and USDA will continue training for State sanitarians on new retail and restaurant food processing techniques. Development of multilingual training programs (begun in FY 1998) will be expanded.

Develop education programs for school children: CDC, FDA, and USDA will train school teachers to teach food safety concepts to school children (in collaboration with State, territorial, local, and other relevant organizations).

Improve consumer and health professional education: FDA and USDA will continue to develop and implement research-based education materials to convey food safety information. CDC will educate and train epidemiologists and public health laboratory workers in proper detection, surveillance, and outbreak investigation of foodborne disease and, internationally, will work with the World Health Organization and other organizations to train health professionals in those settings.

Research

Food safety practices and programs must be science-based to effectively detect and identify pathogens, minimize their presence, assess risk, and respond to outbreaks. Basic research is needed to understand the ecology and etiology of foodborne pathogens, their genetic content, how they multiply, how they are transmitted, and under what conditions they grow. Applied research is then needed to develop the practices and technologies that will enable pathogen detection and control. To better coordinate food safety research, the FY 1999 food safety initiative includes development of an interagency process for reviewing ongoing research and identifying other research needs of FDA, Agricultural Research Service (ARS), CSREES, CDC, and EPA on the highest priority issues.

Develop rapid, cost-effective tests for pathogens in foods: FDA, USDA, CDC, and EPA will collaborate to develop effective methods to detect, identify, and quantify pathogens, with particular emphasis on imported and domestic fresh fruits and vegetables and on pathogens in animal wastes.

Enhance understanding of how pathogens become resistant to food preservation techniques and to antibiotics: FDA and USDA will conduct research into physiological, genetic, and other factors that cause hazardous foodborne microorganisms to develop resistance to preservation techniques, and into the factors that contribute to development of drug resistance by pathogens.

Develop prevention techniques for pathogen avoidance, reduction, and elimination: USDA and FDA will work with other agencies at the Federal and State level, as well as industry and academia to identify points of contamination and to develop new production, processing, and distribution practices that avoid the introduction of contaminants into food producing animals and food, or if contamination is present, reduce levels of or eliminate the contamination. Technologies will include antimicrobial agents, and thermal and non-thermal pasteurization, including irradiation. Collaborative work will also focus on developing systems for improved sanitation of animal production facilities and for handling liquid and solid animal wastes.

Develop better food handling, distribution, and storage procedures: FDA and USDA will evaluate conditions that influence the possibility of food contamination during handling, transportation, and storage, and will develop methods to minimize those conditions.

Develop microbiological baselines for pathogens on fruits and vegetables: Utilizing existing program infrastructure, USDA will conduct a scientifically-sound microbiological survey program for foodborne pathogens on domestic and imported fruits and vegetables. Program costs will be minimized by using the existing infrastructure of the Pesticide Data Program for statistically reliable sampling, participating laboratories, and data reporting capabilities.

**PRESIDENT'S FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE
1999 BUDGET PROPOSAL
(Dollars in Thousands)**

		<u>1998</u>		<u>1999</u>	
	<u>1997</u>	<u>Appro.</u>	<u>Change from 1997</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Change from 1998</u>
A. SURVEILLANCE					
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:					
Food Safety and Inspection Service	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$500	\$1,500	\$0
Economic Research Service	32	32	0	285	253
Subtotal, USDA	1,032	1,532	500	1,785	253
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	678	3,838	3,160	6,038	2,200
Centers for Disease Control	4,500	14,500	10,000	19,000	4,500
Subtotal, HHS	5,178	18,338	13,160	25,038	6,700
Subtotal, Surveillance	6,210	19,870	13,660	26,823	6,953
B. COORDINATION					
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	6,598	7,148	550	7,348	200
C. INSPECTIONS					
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:					
Food Safety and Inspection Service	0	565	565	8,412	7,847
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	67,376	75,246	7,870	102,846	27,600
Subtotal, Inspections	67,376	75,811	8,435	111,258	35,447
D. RISK ASSESSMENT					
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:					
Agricultural Research Service	5,461	4,498	(963)	4,818	320
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service	145	150	5	1,962	1,812
Food Safety and Inspection Service	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
Economic Research Service	33	33	0	686	653
Office of the Chief Economist	62	60	(2)	158	98
Subtotal, USDA	5,701	4,741	(960)	8,624	3,883
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	2,382	6,332	3,950	13,532	7,200
Subtotal, Risk Assessment	8,083	11,073	2,990	22,156	11,083

**PRESIDENT'S FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE
1999 BUDGET PROPOSAL
(Dollars in Thousands)**

	<u>1998</u>			<u>1999</u>	
	<u>1997</u>	<u>Change from Appro. 1997</u>		<u>Request</u>	<u>Change from 1998</u>
E. EDUCATION					
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:					
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service	2,365	2,365	0	7,365	5,000
Food Safety and Inspection Service	0	0	0	2,500	2,500
Food and Consumer Service	0	0	0	2,000	2,000
Office of the Chief Economist	27	38	11	38	0
Economic Research Service	420	420	0	420	0
Subtotal, USDA	2,812	2,823	11	12,323	9,500
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	4,415	6,485	2,070	10,085	3,600
Centers for Disease Control	0	0	0	500	500
Subtotal, HHS	4,415	6,485	2,070	10,585	4,100
Subtotal, Education	7,227	9,308	2,081	22,908	13,600
F. RESEARCH					
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:					
Agricultural Research Service	44,186	50,351	6,165	64,001	13,650
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service	3,724	6,250	2,526	10,438	4,188
Agricultural Marketing Service	0	0	0	6,257	6,257
Subtotal, USDA	47,910	56,601	8,691	80,696	24,095
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	19,127	25,527	6,400	34,727	9,200
Subtotal, Research	67,037	82,128	15,091	115,423	33,295
TOTAL, INITIATIVE	<u>162,531</u>	<u>205,338</u>	<u>42,807</u>	<u>305,916</u>	<u>100,578</u>

**PRESIDENT'S FOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE
1999 BUDGET PROPOSAL
(Dollars in Thousands)**

	<u>1998</u>			<u>1999</u>	
		Change from		Change from	
<u>1997</u>	<u>Appro.</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>1998</u>	
AGENCY TOTALS:					
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:					
Agricultural Research Service	49,647	54,849	5,202	68,819	13,970
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service	6,234	8,765	2,531	19,765	11,000
Agricultural Marketing Service	0	0	0	6,257	6,257
Food Safety and Inspection Service	1,000	2,065	1,065	13,412	11,347
Economic Research Service	485	485	0	1,391	906
Office of the Chief Economist	89	98	9	196	98
Food and Consumer Service	0	0	0	2,000	2,000
Subtotal, USDA Initiative	57,455	66,262	8,807	111,840	45,578
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:					
Food and Drug Administration	100,576	124,576	24,000	174,576	50,000
Centers for Disease Control	4,500	14,500	10,000	19,500	5,000
Subtotal, HHS	105,076	139,076	34,000	194,076	55,000
TOTAL, INITIATIVE	<u>162,531</u>	<u>205,338</u>	<u>42,807</u>	<u>305,916</u>	<u>100,578</u>

abroad and at points of entry, the FDA will be able to make effective use of its new authority.

Development of Guidance on Good Agricultural and Manufacturing Practices. The President will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Secretary of Agriculture and in cooperation with the agricultural community, to develop guidance on good agricultural and manufacturing practices within one year. This guidance will take into account differences in both crops and regions and will address potential **food safety** problems throughout the **food** production and distribution system such as sanitation, worker health, and water quality. The guidance -- the first-ever specific **safety** standards for fruits and vegetables -- will improve the agricultural and manufacturing practices of all those seeking to sell produce in the U.S. market. To ensure that this guidance has the widest possible effect, the President will also direct the FDA and USDA to develop coordinated outreach and educational activities.

Improvement of Monitoring and Inspection Activities Abroad. In addition to committing substantial resources to expand the FDA's international **food** inspection force, the President will direct the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture to report within 90 days on how to improve the monitoring of agricultural and manufacturing practices abroad, to assist foreign countries to improve these practices where necessary, and to prevent the importation of unsafe produce. The President will urge consideration of ways to target inspection and testing toward those areas where problems are most likely to occur.

Clinton Administration Accomplishments In Improving **Food Safety**

The President's announcement builds on a strong record of **food safety** initiatives, ensuring that Americans eat the safest possible **food**. The Administration has put into place improved **safety** standards for meat, poultry and seafood products, and has begun the process of developing enhanced standards for fruit and vegetable juices. The Administration also has expanded research, education and surveillance activities throughout the **food safety** system.

* October, 1997. President announces new initiative to enhance FDA oversight over imported **foods** and develop guidance on good agricultural and manufacturing practices for fruits and vegetables.

* May, 1997. Administration announces comprehensive new initiative to improve the **safety** of nation's **food** supply -- **Food Safety** from Farm to Table -- detailing a \$43 million **food safety** program, including measures to improve surveillance, outbreak response, education, and research.

* January, 1997. President announces new Early-Warning System to gather critical scientific data to help stop **food** borne disease outbreaks quickly and to improve prevention systems further.

* August, 1996. President signs Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996. The law requires drinking water systems to protect against dangerous contaminants like cryptosporidium, and gives people the right to know about contaminants in their tap water.

* August, 1996. President signs **Food** Quality Protection Act of 1996, which streamlines regulation of pesticides by FDA and EPA and puts important new public-health protections in place, especially for children.

* July, 1996. President Clinton announces new regulations that modernize the nation's meat and poultry inspection system for the first time in 90 years. New standards help prevent E.coli bacteria contamination in meat.

* December, 1995. Administration issues new rules to ensure seafood **safety**. Utilizes HACCP regulatory programs to require **food** industries to design and implement preventive measures and increase the industries' responsibility for and control of their **safety** assurance actions.

* 1994. CDC embarks on strategic program to detect, prevent, and control emerging infectious disease threats, some of which are **food** borne, making significant progress toward this goal in each successive year.

* 1993. Vice-President's National Performance Review issues report recommending government and industry move toward a system of preventive controls.



To comment on this service: feedback@www.whitehouse.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: ELENA KAGAN

FROM: TOM FREEDMAN, MARY L. SMITH

RE: REP. STABENOW FOOD SAFETY BILL

DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 1998

SUMMARY

USDA says that Rep. Stabenow introduced this bill as a placeholder -- she was politically unable to introduce the enforcement bill which was introduced in the Senate. USDA supports Rep. Stabenow's bill, but does not put a priority on it. We've attached the section-by-section analysis of the bill. We've asked USDA to look into the Rapid Response Team idea (Sec. 4 of the bill) to see if we could do this without legislation.

HOW STABENOW'S BILL DIFFERS FROM ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS

Rep. Stabenow's bill addresses primarily education, research, and consumer protection. Her bill is not directed toward enforcement. Furthermore, her bill does not provide for giving FDA authority to prevent the importation of produce from countries without safety precautions equivalent to our own -- which our legislation provides for. (The Administration's legislation was introduced by Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA)).

USDA's main enforcement bill, which provides for civil penalties and mandatory recall, has been introduced by Sen. Harkin (D-IA), along with Sens. Daschle (D-SD), Leahy (D-VT), and Sen. Johnson (D-SD).

Section by Section Analysis: Debbie Stabenow's Food Safety Bill

Summary

The Safe Food Action Plan, by Congresswoman Debbie Stabenow, seeks to improve food safety through research, consumer education, federal rapid response to food safety emergencies, and technology transfer programs. The bill uses existing funds and formulas to re-prioritize federal spending toward increased food safety for the nation.

Section 1: Short title, Table of Contents

Defines the short title as the "Safe Food Action Plan Act" and lists the table of contents.

Section 2: Findings

Recognizes the pressing need for increased federal attention to food safety. Cites the great number of people sickened with illnesses from food they have consumed as the reason for developing a pro-active federal food safety strategy.

Section 3: Food Safety Research, Education and Extension Priority

Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish food safety as a priority for the USDA. The Secretary is encouraged to integrate the efforts of USDA with other agencies that handle food safety. Communication with other agencies is stressed as the key to improving the combined federal approach to solving food safety problems. The Secretary is also directed to promote research, extension, and education programs with a multi-disciplinary approach.

Section 4: Food Safety Rapid Response Team

Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a Food Safety Rapid Response Team within the USDA for food safety emergencies. The Secretary will appoint a rapid response coordinating officer to manage the team and to integrate its efforts with other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as with land grants, universities, and other research institutions. The Rapid Response team must prepare an action plan, detailing how it will operate and how the team can be integrated with other agencies that handle food safety. The rapid response action plan must be submitted to Congress for review 12 months after enactment of the Safe Food Action Plan.

Section 5: Emphasis on Food Safety Research in Fund for Rural America

The Fund for Rural America, which provides financial assistance through USDA for many rural projects, is directed to include "increasing food safety from farm-to-consumer" as one of its program priorities.

Section 6: National Food Safety Research, Education, and Extension Program

This Section establishes the "National Food Safety Research, Education, and Extension Program." The program will support research that will reduce the threat of various pathogens to human health, survey and collect data to learn more about pathogens and prepare for future outbreaks, conduct risk assessment analysis to predict the most dangerous gaps in current knowledge, and improve ways to disseminate information about food safety. The USDA is directed to coordinate its efforts at the federal level with all the relevant agencies, as well as with state governments, the private sector, universities and land grant institutions. Grants for such purposes will be awarded on a competitive basis. The Secretary is permitted to consult with the National Academy of Sciences about the National Food Safety Research, Education and Extension Program.

Section 7: Development and Commercialization of Food Safety Technology

The CRADA program, (cooperative agreement for research and development) is expanded to include the development of technology food safety as a program priority.

Balanced Budget
IRS Reform
Campaign Finance Reform

PSW
ideas
w/ Dems

1/30/98

* → TREAS. re FICA

Education

Modernizing
Crumbling Schools
Computers in Classrooms : Teacher Training ~~E-rate~~
for 2000
Training Teachers/Reducing Class Size
After school Options
Education Opportunity Zones
E-rate fight

* → MIKE to write up

Health Care

HMO Reform / Patients' Bill of Rights - Chris [They want to prevent us w/ Dem. bill]
Near Elderly Medicare / Cobra Buy-in
~~Crackdown on Medicare Fraud~~

Family Income

Child Care & Early Childhood Development Tax Credits/Block Grants
Minimum Wage Increase
? Pay Equity Enforcement [→ Laura will tell us what it means]
Small Business Pension Tax Credits
Pension Protections
Protect SS from Raid to Pay for GOP Tax Cuts
Child Labor

- Dodd wants to set
caucus position

Juvenile Crime

Brady Junior
RICO on Gangs
After school Options
Drug/Gun Courts
Stop Teen Smoking / Tobacco Settlement
Drunk Driving . 08

Prosecutors

↑ Health

FEB. 12th

Environment

? Right-to-know on Toxics (They'll send us bills)
Food/Water Safety on Rt to know
National Parks + Food safety
Enviro Crimes

Joel: Strong Families
Safe Neighborhood
Secure Retirement

Judges

Rahm: Gov Economy, protect Family

John: Social protection

... be featured at an 8/26 breakfast in Wichita (Tiahrt release, 8/21). ([Back to Contents](#))

28 NEW JERSEY 08: Pascrell Gearing Up For Martini Launch

Bergen *Record's* Piore writes, in the House, "there's little time to rest between elections. That's especially true" for Rep. **Bill Pascrell** (D) -- a freshman who represents one of the "most closely contested" CDs in the nation. He's already got a war chest of about \$220K -- "more than any of the House's 41 other freshman" Dems. Most experts believe ex-Rep. **Bill Martini** (R) is the "leading candidate" to run against Pascrell. Martini, "for his party, is noncommittal": "It would be premature for me to make any decisions. ... In a few months, we'll see. ... There's plenty of time. ... As a challenger in 1994, I didn't start raising money until February, and I raised \$800,000" (8/25). ([Back to Contents](#))

29 TEXAS 01: Sandlin Pays Up to FEC

Austin American-Statesman's Harlan reports, Rep. **Max Sandlin** (D) will pay a \$7K FEC penalty because he "belatedly reported changes in loans to his campaign," prior to the 3/96 Dem primary. Sandlin Treas. **Anne Yappin**: "While we don't agree 100 percent with the FEC's interpretation, we take full responsibility." Sandlin, who had acted as his own treas. in '96, "relied heavily" on his own money to finance his campaign to replace '96 senate candidate/Rep. **Jim Chapman** (D) (8/23). ([Back to Contents](#))

► POLL UPDATE

30 CBS: Clinton Vs. Jones, Who's Being Truthful?

971 adults surveyed 8/5-6; margin of error +/- 3% (release, 8/22).

Paula Jones Lawsuit

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Go to trial	35%	48%	28%	33%
Settle	55	47	60	55

Clinton Telling The Truth?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Entire truth	13%	7%	17%	12%
Mostly truthful	53	51	58	50
Mostly lying	20	35	11	20

Jones Telling The Truth?

	All	GOP	Dem	Ind
Entire truth	9%	14%	6%	8%
Mstly truthful	50	57	44	52
Mstly lying	26	16	36	21

([Back to Contents](#))

31 NEWSWEEK: Most Want More Spent On Ensuring Food Safety

501 adults surveyed 8/22; MoE +/- 5% (release, 8/23).

Gov't Doing Good Job Ensuring U.S. Produced Food Is Safe?

	Now	3/89
Yes	46%	52%
No	45	38

Gov't Doing Good Job Ensuring Imported Food Is Safe?

	Now	3/89
Yes	33%	44%
No	46	43

Gov't Spending On Food Inspection?

In Past Few Days, Have You Avoided Certain Foods?

971 adults surveyed 8/5-6; MoE +/- 3% (release, 8/22).

Confidence In FDA To Protect Against Food-Borne Illness

	All	Men	Wom
Great deal	15%	18%	13%
Some	52	52	52
Not Much	24	21	27
None	7	8	6

Personally Concerned About Food-Borne Illness

	All	Men	Wom
Very concerned	44%	42%	46%
Somewhat	35	33	36
Not too	15	18	12
Not at all	3	5	2

When Buying Fruits/Vegetables, How Often Do You Check What Country It Came From

	All	Men	Wom
Always	15%	14%	16%
Most of time	20	17	23
Some of time	19	20	19
Hardly ever	38	41	35

[\(Back to Contents\)](#)

► TV MONITOR

This Morning:

ABC's "GMA" hosted Public Health Rn. Sandra Gallegos who discovered the tainted meat epidemic. NBC's "Today" hosted the CSPI's Caroline Smith Dewaal about the trend in food poisoning. "CBS This Morning" hosted Scott Martin, a Texas school teacher suspended for administering a math test that posed questions about prostitution, drugs and gangs. "FOX Morning News" hosted the Space Policy Inst.'s John Logsdon on Mir. C-SPAN's "Washington Journal" hosted *USA Today's* Richard Benedetto, *AP's* Marcia Dunn, Special Counsel to the Pres. Jason Berman, Peace Corps' Mark Gearan, Powell Tate's Sheila Tate, *Palm Beach Post's* Brian Crowley, the Center for Strategic and Int'l Studies' Anthony Cordesman and the Institute of Global Cultural Studies' Parviz Morewedge.

Today/Tonight

For the most up-to-date TV listings, [click here](#).

Last Night

CNN and "NewsHour" led with the FL tobacco settlement. ABC, CBS and NBC led with Mir. "NewsHour" hosted FL Gov. Lawton Chiles (D). "IP" hosted Dan Quayle. "Crossfire" hosted AZ AG Grant Woods and CATO's Robert Levy. "Equal Time" hosted Dick Morris, Center for Public Integrity's Charles Lewis and *Wall Street Journal's* John Fund. "Chris Matthews" hosted *Standard's* Tucker Carlson, ex-Rep. Pat Schroeder (D-CO), and GOP strategist Ed Rollins. "FOX on Politics" hosted GOP consultant Ralph Reed. ABC's "Nightline" examined this year's rash of food poisoning cases.

Laugh Track

David Letterman, on reports that Pres. Clinton has been cheating at golf during his vacation on Martha's Vineyard: "It makes perfect sense to me, because Martha's Vineyard is a very small island, and if you think about it, it's the only thing he can cheat at!" ("Late Show," CBS, 8/25). For Moore Demi, [click here](#)

TOP TEN WAYS TO MAKE TENNIS MORE EXCITING

10. No more silly trophies -- winner gets to sleep with loser's wife.
9. Ball boys: Those adorable Hanson kids.
8. Every single player must legally change name to 'Bjorn'
7. Make it more like baseball, the most thrill-packed sport known to man.
6. Players must compete after night spent bar-hopping with

DRAFT

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES EXPANDED FOOD SAFETY EFFORTS IN FY 1999 BUDGET

"We have built a solid foundation for the health of America's families, but clearly we must do more. No parent should have to think twice about the juice they put their children at breakfast of the hamburger they ordered during dinner out." -- President Clinton, January 25, 1997

Determined to ensure that American families and children eat food that is safe, Vice President Gore today announced that the Administration will seek an additional \$101 million as part of its fiscal 1999 budget proposal to broaden the President's National Food Safety Initiative. The new funds will be used to enhance food safety inspections, cutting-edge research, and foodborne disease surveillance.

The Administration's Food Safety Initiative is a comprehensive and coordinated nation-wide program to improve the safety of the food supply and reduce the possibility that consumers will suffer the adverse health and economic consequences of foodborne illness. The Administration's food safety efforts have already won widespread support among industry and consumer groups as well as the general public. Working with consumers, producers, industry, states, universities, and the public, the Vice President today proposed to:

Expand inspections and compliance efforts, and implement new preventive food safety measures (\$35.4 million)

- **Safeguard school children.** Enhance the ability of state and local food services to safeguard the health of 26 million school-age children by providing food safety training to local school food service providers that prepare school lunches.
- **Protect American consumers.** Seek legislation that would enable FDA to halt imports of fruits or vegetables that are unsafe. Evaluate growing, harvesting, and production practices overseas to ensure the safety of imported foods. Expand inspections of imported products after they enter the United States.
- **Help food producers.** Assist domestic and foreign food producers to develop good manufacturing and agricultural practices.

Enhance surveillance and investigation to improve outbreak response (\$7.0 million)

- **Detect food safety threats early.** Federal food safety agencies will increase the capabilities of the national early-warning surveillance system to help detect and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illness earlier.

- *Monitor threats to food safety.* Significantly expand the range of pathogens under surveillance and target the most virulent.
- *Increase cooperation to protect public health.* Improve information sharing on foodborne outbreaks. Provide critical training and technical assistance to state and local health agencies to conduct investigations of contaminants in foods.

Build the national food safety education campaign (\$13.6 million)

- *Educate the American people about food safety.* An unprecedented public-private partnership will develop a national food safety advertising campaign. Specific education efforts will target cooks, food handlers in home and retail settings, and American seniors.

Accelerate food safety research efforts (\$33.3 million)

- *Prepare for possible future threats to food safety.* Intensify research on emerging pathogens, including E. Coli and campylobacter. Develop rapid tests to detect viruses on a broader range of food products, including fruits and vegetables. Create, for the first time, a national microbiological baseline for pathogens on fruits and vegetables.

Improve our ability to estimate the risks associated with foodborne illnesses (\$11.1 million)

- *Enhance efforts to target, track, and attack foodborne contaminants.*

Strengthen coordination and improve efficiency (\$0.2 million)

- *Expand assistance to state and local governments.* Continue to ensure quick and accurate detection and coordination of response to outbreaks, and evaluation of those responses. Establish a program to improve outbreak coordination through exchange of employees among federal, state, and local food safety programs and within state and local programs.

DRAFT

USDA asked if the VP would want to talk about food safety in the budget. There isn't much new, but I asked him to put together what

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FACSIMILE COVER SHEET
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20250

Phone: 202-720-4623

Fax: 202-720-5043

TO: Tom Freeman

Company/Agency: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: 456-7431

FROM: Andy / Jon

DATE: _____

Pages (including cover sheet) _____

Comments: Not really a press release. but
you get the idea. Biggest new
developments - 1) School Lunch Piece -
2) FDA Authority on imports
3) targeting emerging pathogens

If you have trouble with this transmission, please call 202-720-4623.

(11) [q]WA Food Inspection, Bjt,0617

Ag secretary: Clinton to seek \$101 million more for food safety
SEATTLE (AP) President Clinton will propose spending \$101 million more on food inspection and safety during the next fiscal year, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Wednesday.

Glickman made the announcement during a speech at the University of Washington, after meeting with victims of the 1993 outbreak of E. coli meat contamination in the Pacific Northwest.

Glickman also made a pitch for expanding his powers to regulate food processors. "I don't want another family to go through what the families I met with this afternoon have been through," he said.

Clinton called for improving food safety in his State of the Union address Tuesday. And on Monday, the Department of Agriculture began a new system it hopes will prevent contamination in processing plants.

But Glickman said he is handicapped by current law, which only permits him to shut down processors, but not fine them for lesser violations or force them to recall products.

"We should not treat unsafe food any differently from any other threat to public health," he said.

For fiscal year 1998, the USDA's budget for food safety inspection is \$690 million, up \$48 million from the year before. Glickman said that while many people complain about the government, this is one area where people want the government to do more.

"The health interests of consumers and the economic interests of the food industry are coming together and that's because safe food sells," he said.

Americans have a confidence in the safety of their food that's unknown in the rest of the world, and the nation's growers and processors can't afford to lose that, he said.

On Monday, the USDA began its "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points," system for monitoring larger meat and poultry processing plants.

It requires the plants to install their own facilities and preventive measures to reduce E. coli and salmonella bacteria and improve sanitation. Glickman said that's a revolutionary improvement over the old system that relied on inspectors' senses of sight, touch and smell.

He said the additional money sought by Clinton would expand that system, along with other inspections and safety measures, expand an early warning system to speed detection of and response to outbreaks of food borne illness, improve food safety education and provide more money for research.

Glickman toured the state's public health laboratories, which he praised along with its researchers for being on the cutting edge of fighting food borne disease.

He came to Seattle at the invitation of Suzanne Kiner of Redmond, whose daughter, Brianne, lapsed into a coma for 42 days after eating a tainted hamburger in the 1993 outbreak. She continues to undergo therapy and rehabilitation.

More than 600 people in Washington, most of them children, got sick in early 1993 from eating Jack in the Box hamburgers contaminated with E. coli O157:H7 bacteria. Three children died.

San Diego-based Foodmaker Inc., the owner of Jack in the Box, set aside a \$100 million insurance pool to cover lawsuit settlements. The largest settlement, \$15.6 million, went to the Kiner family.

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Clinton seeks \$101 million rise in food safety budget

By Julie Vorman

WASHINGTON, Jan 28 (Reuters) - President Bill Clinton will propose a substantial increase of \$101 million for food safety in his 1999 budget, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said on Wednesday.

The \$101 million hike is part of the Clinton administration's initiative to find new ways of preventing and detecting food-borne disease, but the increase is larger than many trade groups, consumer activists and food safety experts had expected.

Earlier drafts of the Clinton budget were said to include an increase of about \$71 million for food safety issues, including \$5 million for the Centers for Disease Control to improve detection of food-borne disease.

Glickman, speaking to scientists at the University of Washington's public health school in Seattle, said much of the money would be dedicated to research and additional food inspectors.

"For 1999, President Clinton will propose an increase of \$101 million -- over and above the 1998 levels -- to continue high-priority food safety efforts from enhanced inspections to cutting-edge research and surveillance," Glickman said in the speech, copies of which were distributed in Washington.

The additional funds are intended to expand preventive safety measures, help the CDC build an "early warning system" for food disease outbreaks and develop fast, cost-effective tests for pathogens in foods, he said.

Last year, the federal budget boosted spending on overall food safety programs by \$43.5 million to an overall total of just less than \$750 million.

After his speech, Glickman told reporters in Seattle that the proposed \$101 million increase also included a hike in the Food and Drug Administration's budget for inspecting imported fruits and vegetables.

The USDA, FDA and CDC are among a dozen federal agencies that share responsibility for protecting the nation's food supply.

On Monday, Clinton is scheduled to release his proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins in October.

In Washington, Democratic congressional sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, have said the budget proposal would include \$25 million to \$29 million for additional food safety inspectors, mostly at the FDA.

Food safety concerns became more prominent last year after the record recall of some 25 million pounds of tainted ground beef and several smaller outbreaks of food disease including schoolchildren sickened by frozen strawberries imported from Mexico.

REUTERS

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112 [j] Food group braces for proposed user fees in budget

WASHINGTON, Jan 28 (Reuters) - The Clinton Administration's budget proposal for fiscal 1999 will include some \$70 million in additional funding for food safety plus seek user fees for food inspection activities, officials with the National Food Processors Association said Wednesday.

But the administration's controversial proposal to give the U.S. Agriculture Department mandatory recall authority over meat plants is unlikely to gather much steam during what will be a short legislative session before autumn congressional elections, they said.

"We were told to expect user fees in the budget proposal," John Cady, head of the trade group that represents the \$400 billion food processing industry, told reporters at a briefing.

The concept of user fees has been repeatedly pushed by the Office of Management and Budget as a way to generate revenue to pay for federal programs. But food industry and consumer groups oppose user fees, contending that inspection programs should be paid for by the federal government.

"We're optimistic" that user fees won't be approved by congress, but "we must take it seriously" because of the additional budget dollars sought for food safety, said Kelly Johnston, a lobbyist for the trade group.

The Clinton budget proposal for fiscal 1999, due to be released on Monday, will include an increase of some \$70 million for food safety programs. It would put spending on food safety above \$100 million, Cady said.

Most of the proposed increase was earmarked for food safety research, risk analysis and consumer education, Cady said. Exact details remained unclear, he said.

Congress, which returned to work this week after a winter break, has only 99 scheduled work days in the remainder of the session before recessing, Cadey said. That means Congress will have little time to complete its work on budget and other mandatory items, let alone tackle new proposals, he said.

But one legislative proposal that might pick up support during the session is a bill introduced late last year by Rep. Anna Eschoo, a California Democrat, to tighten border inspections of imported fruit and vegetables by the Food and Drug Administration.

The current version of the bill is "pretty broad and vague" and it's unclear whether the legislation could trigger trade retaliation by exporting nations, Johnston said. "This bill has the most potential of passing congress during this short session," he said.

((Julie Voxman, Washington commodities/energy desk
email: commodsenenergy.washington.newsroom@reuters.com))

REUTERS

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Washington, D. C.



Food Safety
SW

FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

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27-Jan-98

TO:

TOM FREEDMAN

SUBJECT:

FOOD WATCH

FROM:

CATHY R. MAYS 456-6515
DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

If there are any problems receiving this transmission,
please call the sender, or (202) 395-7370.

DON'T EAT ANY HOHOS/TWINKIES. . .

Date: 01/27/98 Time: 15:17

JTwinkies, HoHo's recalled for possible asbestos contamination

CHICAGO (AP) More than a dozen types of Hostess snacks, including HoHo's and Twinkies, sold in 21 states are being recalled because of possible asbestos contamination.

Kansas City, Mo.-based Interstate Brands Corp. said today it believes the products are safe, but its Hostess cake division is voluntarily recalling them. There are concerns they may have been affected by asbestos fibers in insulation removed from a boiler at the company's suburban Schiller Park plant Jan. 11.

Asbestos is a fibrous substance known to cause cancer and other health problems.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency had planned to close the plant Monday night when it was shut down voluntarily.

"Everything they had in their plant or on their docks has been embargoed," said Tom Schafer, a spokesman for the Illinois Public Health Department. "It is being held."

The products were sold in the central United States and have a "57" code as part of the expiration date on the package, the company said. Only products with the "57" code are subject to the recall.

The recall includes 13 Hostess products plus Dolly Madison cupcakes, almost all of which have expiration dates ranging from Jan. 22 through Feb. 6. HoHo's included have expiration dates ranging from Jan. 29 to Feb. 13. The products can be returned to the place they were purchased for a complete refund.

The incident is being investigated by state and federal officials, including the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Nancy Quick, director of OSHA's Des Plaines office, said the agency received a complaint of possible employee exposure to asbestos and began its inspection last Friday. The agency has not yet received results of tests to determine if anyone was exposed to asbestos.

Interstate Brands is the nation's largest wholesale baker. The snack brands involved in the recall are Dolly Madison Cupcakes and the following Hostess products: HoHo's, Twinkies, Light Twinkies, Cupcakes, Light Cup, Light Brownie, Choccolicious, Muffin-Oat Bran, Valentine, Hoppers, Dessert Cup, Fruit Pies and Honey Bun.

Schafer said the company told health officials that the states involved are: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

APNP-01-27-98 1526EST

Food safety
Consumer hotline

Ross

Ellen D. Smith
690-7854
Wanderer

301-270 4881

No program - Cont'l

① Baesler | → smoke powder

② Robb - 1.5 course

③ Wagon

④ Map price low

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Karen Wilcox USDA

Heave Kennedy

Mike Friedl. FDA

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Eli Altie

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

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Food Safety 9/16

To: Tom Freeman Date:
Fax #: 456-7431 Pages: 3, including this cover sheet.
From:
Subject: Joan
COMMENTS:

Revised Per Eric D

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CLINTON ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES EXPANDED FOOD SAFETY EFFORTS IN FY 1999 BUDGET

"We have built a solid foundation for the health of America's families, but clearly we must do more. No parent should have to think twice about the juice they put their children at breakfast or the hamburger they ordered during dinner out." — President Clinton, January 25, 1997

Determined to ensure that American families and children eat food that is safe, Vice President Gore today announced that the Administration will seek an additional \$101 million as part of its fiscal 1999 budget proposal to broaden the President's National Food Safety Initiative. The new funds will be used to enhance food safety inspections, cutting-edge research, and foodborne disease surveillance.

The Administration's Food Safety Initiative is a comprehensive and coordinated nation-wide program to improve the safety of the food supply and reduce the possibility that consumers will suffer the adverse health and economic consequences of foodborne illness. The Administration's food safety efforts have already won widespread support among industry and consumer groups as well as the general public. Working with consumers, producers, industry, states, universities, and the public, the Vice President today proposed to:

Expand inspections and compliance efforts, and implement new preventive food safety measures (\$35.4 million)

- *Safeguard school children.* Enhance the ability of state and local food services to safeguard the health of 26 million school-age children by providing food safety training to local school food service providers that prepare school lunches.
- *Protect American consumers.* Seek legislation that would require FDA to halt imports of fruits or vegetables from countries that are not on par with U.S. standards. Evaluate growing, harvesting, and production practices overseas to ensure the safety of imported foods. Expand inspections of imported products before they enter the United States.
- *Help food producers.* Assist domestic and foreign food producers to develop good manufacturing and agricultural practices.

Enhance surveillance and investigation to improve outbreak response (\$7.0 million)

- *Detect food safety threats early.* Federal food safety agencies will increase the capabilities of the national early-warning surveillance system to help detect and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illness earlier.

- *Monitor threats to food safety.* Significantly expand the range of pathogens under surveillance and target the most dangerous.
- *Increase cooperation to protect public health.* Improve information sharing on foodborne outbreaks. Provide critical training and technical assistance to state and local health agencies to conduct investigations of contaminants in foods.

Build the national food safety education campaign (\$13.6 million)

- *Educate the American people about food safety.* Launch an unprecedented public-private partnership will develop a national food safety advertising campaign. Specific education efforts will target cooks, food handlers in home and retail settings, and American seniors.

Accelerate food safety research efforts (\$33.3 million)

- *Prepare for possible future threats to food safety.* Intensify research on emerging pathogens, including E. Coli and campylobacter. Develop rapid tests to detect viruses on a broader range of food products, including fruits and vegetables. Create, for the first time, a national microbiological baseline for pathogens on fruits and vegetables.

Improve our ability to estimate the risks associated with foodborne illnesses (\$11.1 million)

- *Enhance efforts to target, track, and attack foodborne contaminants.*

Strengthen coordination and improve efficiency (\$0.2 million)

- *Expand assistance to state and local governments.* Continue to ensure quick and accurate detection and coordination of response to outbreaks, and evaluation of those responses. Establish a program to improve outbreak coordination through exchange of employees among federal, state, and local food safety programs and within state and local programs.