

Food Safety Working Group Releases 2009-2011 Progress Report

December 22, 2011

The Federal Food Safety Working Group (“FSWG”) yesterday released a [progress report](#) highlighting the groups accomplishments over the last two years and outlining priorities for the future. Established by President Obama in 2009, the FSWG is responsible for building a modern food safety system. Secretary for Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius noted in a conference call that until recently, the federal government had been “monitoring a 21st century food system with 20th century tools.” The purpose of the FSWG is to correct that deficiency.

Among its accomplishments since its inception, the FSWG has:

- issued an egg safety rule to control Salmonella contamination in egg shells
- published a draft guidance for salmonella in animal feed
- implemented stricter pathogen reduction performance standards for salmonella and new standards for campylobacter
- announced the classification of new strands of E. coli as adulterants in non-intact raw beef
- issued commodity specific draft guidance on agricultural practices that reduce the risk of microbial contamination
- established the Produce Safety Alliance, a private-public partnership to provide access to food safety educational materials for produce growers and packers
- identified indicators of economically motivated adulteration
- established a Senior Executive Council to determine appropriate actions to reduce cancelled pesticide and environmental contaminant residue in the food supply
- launched the Reportable Food Registry

Going forward, the FSWG will focus on implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (“FSMA”). Efforts will include preventive controls, retail safety, enhanced domestic surveillance, and import safety. Stakeholders should be prepared to take advantage of opportunities to engage with the FSWG as they make progress on FSMA implementation.