

Managing Food Safety Practices from Farm to Table

*"Institutional Roles in
Risk-Based Management"*

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The Institutional Lens

- Food safety commonly seen as a scientific, business and regulatory challenge
- Looking through the institutional lens unavoidable in a farm-to-table, risk-based approach to food safety
- Food safety success affected by capacities, behaviors and interactions of many institutions
- Policymakers are getting it!



Institutions Involved in Multi-State Outbreak Investigations

- **State and local government** – early detection and frontline response
 - Public health labs
 - Health departments
 - Food inspection agencies
- **Federal government** – national coordination, traceback, and risk communication
 - CDC
 - FDA
 - USDA
- **Food industry** – provide critical information, manage recalls
 - Producers
 - Processors
 - Retailers
- **Public** – ultimate measure of effectiveness
 - Victims
 - Consumers
 - Press



Institutional Roles in Prevention of Foodborne Illness

- **Hazard identification and analysis**
 - Industry from farm to table
 - CDC, FDA, USDA
 - Government and academic research orgs
- **Developing and implementing interventions**
 - Industry from farm to table
 - ARS and other research orgs
- **Setting food safety standards**
 - FDA, USDA and state and local agencies
 - Codex, ISO and other independent bodies
 - Food companies and retailers through purchase specs
- **Verifying and enforcing compliance**
 - Federal, state and local inspection agencies
 - Commercial purchasers
 - Third party auditors



Key Points About Institutions

- *Highly diverse* in their roles, perspectives, and capacities
- *Highly interdependent* in achieving prevention goals and responding to outbreaks
- Yet tend to *work in stovepipes* and focus on their piece of the system
- *Hampered by traditional practices* that create barriers to information sharing and other collaboration
- ***More work needed to foster an integrated, systems approach to food safety***



Policymakers Are Getting It

- FDA's *Food Protection Plan* and Administration's *Import Action Plan*
- Congressional hearings and other responses to *Salmonella saintpaul* outbreak
- Pending surveillance and outbreak response legislation
- Pending FDA food safety legislation



Key Elements of Making It Work

- Clearly defining responsibilities and roles of all institutions
- Building capacity of institutions to meet their responsibilities
- Breaking down barriers to information sharing and other collaboration
- Creating new mechanisms for collaboration



Conclusion

- We're at a turning point on food safety, with broad change on the way
- Getting the science and policy right is essential
- But change won't work to improve food safety unless we get the institutions right



For More Information....

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