

FOODBORNE ILLNESS MULTIPLE FIREWALLS & SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

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Multiple Firewalls Are Key to Prevention

- Farmers and ranchers
- Packers and processors
- Educators
- Consumers

Farmers and Ranchers

- Need to be able to identify sources of microorganisms without destroying the economic viability of farms and ranches.
 - May need a new form of crop insurance.
 - Importance of “testing to find.”

Packers and Processors

- \$500,000,000 invested in innovation using open technology.
- Recalls cost \$billions in loss of demand
- Hudson Foods and Beef America went out of business when facilities were tainted by E. coli O157:H7 outbreaks.
- Subject to USDA comprehensive regulations and the risk of suspension of operations.
- Exposed to litigation, which Economic Research Service describes as inefficient.

***E. coli* O157:H7**

The costs during the past 10 years

(in millions of \$)

Impact on demand	\$1,584
Impact on boneless beef prices	172
Capital expenditure by top 10 packers	400
Increased operating costs for top 10	250
Spending by next 20 packers	100
Recall costs incurred by packers	100
Government and industry research	65
TOTAL:	\$2,671

Educators

- Food safety education must be more than public-service announcements.
- Food safety education needs to be given higher priority and deserves more resources.

Consumers

- Must be engaged by industry, government and educators.
- Consumers are the last firewall, where failure can be unspeakably tragic.

Government

- Needs to accommodate new technology.
- Needs to maintain uniformity in managing thousands of inspectors.
- Needs to provide incentives for excellence and innovation, while punishing willful or negligent non-compliance.

Responding to Food Safety Failures

- Corrective actions - HACCP
- Suspensions and notices of intended enforcement.
- Financial liability – a blunt instrument and a minimal deterrent.
- Criminal liability for willful violations – ultimate deterrent.

Who is Responsible?

- Responsibility for preventing foodborne illness is shared by all of us.
- When one of us fails, we all fail.