



CENTER FOR  
Science IN THE  
Public Interest

## Managing Safety in a Complex Globalized Market

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# CSPI

- The Center for Science in the Public Interest is a bi-national NGO representing consumers in both the US and Canada
- 900,000 subscribers to the Nutrition Action Health Newsletter in U.S. and Canada
- Issues:
  - Food Safety
  - Nutrition
  - Alcohol Policy
  - Biotechnology
  - Integrity in Science
  - Eating Green

# Produce Outbreaks

**This month's *Salmonella* outbreak from tomatoes is one of many.** CSPI has documented hundreds of outbreaks linked to produce and dozens from tomatoes.

- **Spinach: *E. coli* 0157:H7 – FALL 2006**
  - Bagged spinach
  - Sickened 204 people, with 3 confirmed and 1 suspected fatalities
  - Affected consumers in 26 states
- **Tomatoes: *Salmonella* Typhimurium – FALL 2006**
  - Tomatoes served in restaurants in the affected states.
  - 183 confirmed cases
  - Affected consumers in 21 States
- **Lettuce: *E. coli* 0157:H7 – FALL 2006**
  - Three states affected: New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania
  - Lettuce served in Taco Bell restaurants
  - Total of 67 cases

# EMERGING ISSUES

- Why is the government response so slow?
- Why have hundreds of produce outbreaks occurred without a formal government response, other than consumer advisories?
- What is the impact on consumer confidence?

# Tomatoes, 2008

- Since April, 552 persons infected with *Salmonella* Saintpaul with the same genetic fingerprint have been identified in 32 states and the District of Columbia:  
Arkansas (3 persons), Arizona (29), California (8), Colorado (4), Connecticut (4), Florida (1), Georgia (11), Idaho (3), Illinois (34), Indiana (8), Kansas (9), Kentucky (1), Maryland (18), Michigan (4), Missouri (10), New Hampshire (1), New Jersey (1), New Mexico (73), New York (10), North Carolina (1), Ohio (3), Oklahoma (5), Oregon (5), Pennsylvania (5), Rhode Island (2), Tennessee (4), Texas (265), Utah (2), Virginia (20), Vermont (1), Washington (1), Wisconsin (5), and the District of Columbia (1)
- Among the 281 persons with information available, illnesses began between April 10 and June 10, 2008. Patients range in age from <1 to 88 years; 49% are female. At least 53 persons were hospitalized. No deaths have been officially attributed to this outbreak. However, a man in his sixties who died in Texas from cancer had an infection with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella Saint Paul* at the time of his death. The infection may have contributed to his death.
- FDA is advising U.S. consumers to limit their tomato consumption to those that are not the likely source of this outbreak.
  - These include cherry tomatoes; grape tomatoes; tomatoes sold with the vine still attached; tomatoes grown at home; and red plum, red Roma, and round red tomatoes from specific sources listed at: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.htm>

# EMERGING ISSUES

- Traceability -- Our ability to track and connect illnesses far outstrips our ability to track products through a global marketplace
- Effective Audit Systems – The ability to trust the safety and quality of products produced outside of specific oversight systems, whether they are local, regional, or national.

# WHAT CONSUMERS SEE



# Drivers of Reform

**New Communication Tools/Democracy on the Web**

**Instant Access to Information**

**Consumer's Ability to Shift Buying Habits**

**Emergency Planning/ Communications**

# Available Online

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Outbreak Alert! Database - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar contains the URL "http://www.cspinet.org/foodsafety/outbreak/pathogen.php". The page features the logo for the "CENTER FOR Science IN THE Public Interest" on the left and the text "Outbreak Alert! DATABASE" on the right. Below the logo, there is a search section with the heading "Search all Outbreaks by Food, Pathogen or State:" and a search input field with a "Search" button. Underneath, it says "OR" and "Click on a category to begin your search:". There are three dropdown menus labeled "Food (Definitions)", "Pathogen (Definitions)", and "State". The "Food" dropdown is open, showing a list of categories: Beef, Beverages, Both, Breads and Bakery, Dairy, Eggs, Game, Luncheon/Other Meats, Multi-ingredient, Pork, Poultry, Produce (with a sub-menu open showing Fruits, Produce Dishes, and Vegetables), and Seafood. A small text box on the left says "If you have". At the bottom of the page, there is a footer that reads "out the Outbreak Alert! Database, please email [foodsafety@cspinet.org](mailto:foodsafety@cspinet.org)". The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Internet" and "100%".

<http://www.cspinet.org/foodsafety>

# Drivers of Reform

- Emerging markets – developed to developing and back again
- How food safety is viewed in other world regions
- Can we rely on global supply chains in the absence of adequate government oversight (ours and theirs)?

# How is food transported and sold? (Street scenes from India, China)



What sanitation standards are in use in retail markets? (India)



# Is refrigeration the norm? (Shanghai market)



# Are there walls and ceiling? (Jaipur, Old Delhi)



# How do consumers buy food today? (Beijing)



# Exciting News from Safe Food International:

SFI is launching a website containing the news contained in SFI's Regional Updates! Please Visit:

<http://regionalnews.safefoodinternational.org/>

This website includes the following topics from each region:

- Food/Waterborne Illness Outbreaks
- Food Safety Studies
- Food Safety Policy Issues
- Animal/Plant Health Issues

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