



FDA: The Safety of Our Food

This week, the FDA released a progress report on our Food Protection Plan. While I am very pleased with the many developments that have occurred since we first issued the plan in November of 2007, we have much yet to do. The food borne Salmonella outbreak that we are currently experiencing emphasizes the complexities of keeping safe an enormous array of products that come from farms and fields around the world to your table.

My take on this is that along with the FDA, all parties involved in the nation's food supply need to participate in a plan for you and your family to continue to enjoy one of the safest food supplies in the world. We are on the right path, but we—and others—need to do more and the FDA will take the lead.

We must build on recent accomplishments, such as our landmark product safety agree-

ments with China to ensure quality in production. The FDA will accelerate collaborative efforts in the development of rapid detection methods for bacteria like E. Coli and Salmonella. We must work with all those involved in the food supply chain, including growers, packers, distributors and retailers to develop better track and trace technologies.

As regulators, FDA will establish the rules—much like states set traffic laws to keep us safe. We expect regulated industry to comply with our rules just as we depend on each other to drive responsibly. And FDA has inspectors who help police compliance with our standards.

Changes in how food is produced and processed and the global supply chain now require changes in our rules. We have asked Congress to grant us additional authorities outlined in our Food Protection Plan.

As consumers, you and your family are also a critical part of

the food safety of the future. By educating yourselves about food safety, making good use of information contained on FDA's web site, and by both reporting problems as well as giving us critical feedback, you too can help make our food safety system even stronger.

The FDA has provided an opportunity for you to be involved in setting the course for food protection by establishing a public docket - open until July 31st - to receive your input and comments on FDA's Food Protection Plan. We welcome your participation in the process and look forward to your ideas and suggestions.

I hope you and your family have a happy and healthy Fourth of July, and check back here next week for Andy's Take.

[FDA](#)

[Link to Public Docket](#)

Andy

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