

**President's Food Safety Working Group Listening Session
May 13, 2009**

**Focus on Prevention Breakout Group
Breakout Listening Session Notes**

Note: These meeting notes do not represent the views of the United States government, and are only intended to capture the various views of participants, including non-government participants, during the listening session. The points listed below describe these views and do not necessarily represent a consensus opinion of the group.

Moderators:

Joshua Sharfstein, Principal Deputy Commissioner, Acting Commissioner for Food and Drugs; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration
Dr. Elisabeth Hagen, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Public Health Science; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

Participants: Anne Cannon, U.S. House of Representatives; Candice Cho, U.S. Senate; Sandra B. Eskin, Georgetown University Health Policy Institute; Scott Faber, Grocery Manufacturers of America; Ami Gadhia, Consumers Union; Sarah Gallo, National Farmers Union; Bob Hahn, National Meat Assoc.; Phili Karsting, U.S. Senate; Andy Kimbrell, Center for Food Safety; Virgil Miller, U.S. House of Representatives; Erik Olson, Pew Charitable Trusts; Joe Reardon, Assoc. of Food and Drug Officials; Adam Reichardt, Assoc. of State and Territorial Health Officials; Bob Reinhard, Sara Lee Corporation; Michael Robach, Cargill; Deborah White, Food Marketing Institute

Question 1: Do you agree that this Principle should be a priority area of focus for the Obama Administration and that the Principle is framed properly?

- Yes.
- Prevention should be the cornerstone of a new food safety system.
- To guide and assess prevention efforts, we need to develop good metrics of success in prevention, and of the impact of foodborne illness.
- Preventing antibiotic resistance of pathogens is a key element of prevention.
- Preventive controls are needed across the food industry, and the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) model should be widely adopted.

Question 2: What should be the roles and responsibilities of the federal government, state and local governments, industry, and consumers, individually and in relation to each other?

- Prevention is a shared responsibility across the entire continuum, from farm-to-fork.
- Opportunities for public-private partnerships for education and training should be explored

THIS PAPER DOES NOT REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

- Federal Government: develop standards, support research, evaluate risk, and integrate the public oversight system.
- State and local governments: participate fully in preventive efforts, including assessment of preventive controls as part of an integrated system
- Industry: take responsibility for prevention, implement preventive controls, conduct training, and share effective prevention technology.
- Consumers: learn about risks and prepare foods appropriately

Question 3: What new or expanded authorities, if any, should the federal government have?

- The Federal Government should consider preventive controls and a HACCP system.
- The Federal Government should consider equivalent standards for preventive controls for all foods, regardless of origin.

Question 4: What current federal government food safety activities should be expanded, scaled back, or stopped?

- The Federal Government should expand research and training programs, in collaboration with universities.
- The Federal Government should develop good metrics on food safety.
- The Federal Government should consider good manufacturing practices, preventive controls, and HACCP approaches.
- The Federal Government should maintain flexibility in its approach, so regulations do not become outdated quickly.
- The Federal Government should conduct risk analysis and attribute illness to particular foods if possible.
- The Federal Government should assess antibiotic use in agriculture to reduce the development of resistant organisms.

Question 5: What actions should be taken, alone or in collaboration with others, by a) the federal government, b) industry, c) state and local governments, d) foreign governments, and e) others?

- See above

Question 6: What are the obstacles to and opportunities for success?

- Opportunities: consensus on the importance of prevention and the idea of preventive controls; agreement that additional resources are needed in the food safety system.
- Obstacles: prevention is not as exciting as outbreak response, and there is always a risk that key resources will be diverted.