Overview of USDA Inspection

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CANADA'S WORST NIGHTMARE...

A MAD COW IN A SARS MASK BEING BITTEN BY A WEST NILE MOSQUITO.
Maple Leaf Foods, Canada 2008

- Listeria monocytogenes-contaminated deli meats caused 57 illnesses and 23 deaths
- contamination source was commercial meat slicers that had meat residue trapped deep inside the slicing mechanisms
- textbook risk communication, lousy risk management
- delay in warning the public
Maple Leaf listeria review

- focus on food safety was insufficient among senior management at company and government
- insufficient planning for a potential outbreak;
- those involved lacked a sense of urgency at the outset of the outbreak
- Weatherill (2009) specifically identified the need for cultures of food safety at food processing companies, calling for ”actions, not words”
Maple Leaf – try harder

• provide a chronological accounting of the outbreak (who knew what when)
• add warning labels to packages of ready-to-eat meats for persons at high risk for listeriosis
• release details of product and environmental testing results, perhaps through the establishment of a website that provided Listeria spp. testing data in real time
Really big nosestretcher alert:
Leading Toronto hospital says cold cuts, raw fish, OK for expectant mothers

• According to the (incorrect) Canadian Family Physician’s statement: “*pregnant women need not avoid soft-ripened cheeses or deli meats, so long as they are consumed in moderation and obtained from reputable stores.*”

• Deli meats or cold-cuts top the list of foods to avoid while pregnant

• Nearly 60 per cent of pregnant women diagnosed with listeriosis either miscarry or have stillbirths

• The CDC has estimated approximately 2,500 cases of listeriosis occur annually in the U.S., with about 500 cases resulting in death
Really big nosestretcher alert: Leading Toronto hospital says cold cuts, raw fish, OK for expectant mothers

• The information provided to pregnant women by health care providers needs to be targeted and clear

• The CDC has estimated approximately 2,500 cases of listeriosis occur annually in the U.S., with about 500 cases resulting in death

• In 2000, listeria exposure resulted in a higher rate of hospitalization than any other foodborne pathogen and more than one-third of reported deaths from food pathogens
Listeria in Cantaloupe, Colorado 2011

- 33 dead
- 146 sickened
- Producers blame auditors, auditors blame government
- Producers lose, consumers lose
Salmonella in cantaloupe, 2012

- 3 dead
- 270 sick
- 78 hospitalized

http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/typhimurium-cantaloupe-08-12/index.html
http://barfblog.foodsafety.ksu.edu/blog/155929/12/08/28/2-dead-178-sick-are-consumers-responsible-salmonella-field-or-packing-shed-fda-
E. coli O157 in Romaine lettuce, Dec. 2011, Missouri

• 60 people sick in 10 states
• publicly linked to salad bars at Schnucks
• possibly grown in California
• limited availability of risk information

http://bites.ksu.edu/leafy-greens-related-outbreaks
http://www.barfblog.com/blog/151817/11/12/07/60-sick-e-coli-o157-10-states-it-was-romaine-lettuce-grown-california-served-sc
Eat Local: Movement stresses safety

• "Buying locally is much safer than just eating food that has been purchased en masse from god knows where."
Farmers markets and local foods

- Carnivore, herbivore, omnivore, locovore
- All at risk for foodborne illness
- Bacteria are blind to source, they don’t care whether the product they live in is sold at a retail store or farmers market
Honest to Goodness
Down-to-Earth
Farm-Fresh
Freshly-Picked
Home-Grown
Hand-Made
Country-Kitchen
Cottage-Industry
Good Old-Fashioned
Honest
Salt-of-the-Earth
Fat-of-the-Land
Fresh
Whole Natural
Foods - Sourced
Straight from
Local
Farms - Just Caught
Direct to You
Every Day
Value
Every Weekend
Come Rain or Shine!
100% Fresh
100% Local
100% Oz Made

Jan Power's
Farmers Markets
Events
E. coli O157 outbreak on strawberries in Oregon

• 1 dead 14 sick

• Deer droppings caused outbreak

• Six samples from Jaquith Strawberry Farm in Washington County tested positive for the E. coli O157:H7 strain that sickened 15 people and killed one in Oregon

• The positive tests probably indicate that several or perhaps many of the deer around Jaquith’s property carry O157:H7
Is porn industry more responsible than food industry?

- California's multibillion-dollar adult entertainment industry halted production after an actor tested positive for HIV
- Food industry blames the consumer
  - cook pot pies
  - cook hamburger
  - cook eggs
- Equivalent would be porn industry saying, use a condom
Sprout-related outbreaks

http://bites.ksu.edu/sprouts-associated-outbreaks
Third-party audits

“The contributions of third-party audits to food safety is the same as the contribution of mail-order diploma mills to education. ... I have not seen a single company that has had an outbreak or recall that didn't have a series of audits with really high scores.”

– Mansour Samadpour, president, IEH Laboratories, Seattle
Third-party audits

“No one should rely on third-party audits to ensure food safety.”
– Will Daniels, food safety, Earthbound Farm

“There is no scientific basis for certification/validation in audits” and audits often are not “transparent enough for the scientific community to survey and critically analyze what they are actually measuring”
– Robert Buchanan, director of the Center for Food Systems Safety & Security at the University of Maryland
Improving audits and inspection

- More companies evaluating risks of suppliers themselves
- More companies evaluating own practices internally, at arms length
- An auditor industry that polices itself better
- Auditors with better risk identification
- Companies using audit results
- Adopting new technologies such as social media, infosheets, video observation
- Combat indifference
Marketing food safety

• Source food from safe sources
• Public disclosure of food safety inspection results
• Mandatory food handler certification
• Rapid, relevant, reliable and repeated information
• Compel rather than educate
Marketing food safety culture

- Farm
- Processing/distribution
- Retail/foodservice
- Consumers

Customer feedback
“The Publix Deli is committed to the highest quality fresh cold cuts & cheeses Therefore we recommend all cold cuts are best if used within three days of purchase And all cheese items are best if used within four days of purchase”
Calif. lettuce positive for E. coli O157:H7 in Canada

Canadians are being warned by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency not to eat Tanimura & Antle brand Romaine Lettuce from Salinas, Calif. because it may be contaminated with E. coli O157:H7.

The affected product, Tanimura & Antle brand Romaine Lettuce, produce of USA, is sold in a plastic package containing 1 head of lettuce. The package bears the UPC 270184. The affected product was sold at retail from August 8, 2012 through August 17, 2012.

This product has been distributed in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Nunavut and Yukon.

There have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of this product.