



GROCERY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ON FOOD SAFETY

Summary

The Grocery Manufacturers Association strongly supports efforts to improve the safety of America's food supplies and urges the Obama Administration to continue to make the prevention of contamination the foundation of our nation's food safety strategies.

Recommendations:

- **Increase FDA food-related spending to \$900 million.** The Obama Administration should increase FDA food-related spending to \$740 million in FY 2010 and to \$900 million by FY 2012 to rebuild FDA's scientific capacity. At a time when food prices are increasing twice as fast as inflation, the Administration should use general revenue—and reject broad food taxes or fees—to finance essential FDA functions.
- **Require Food Safety Plans.** The Obama Administration should work with Congress to require every food company selling food in the U.S. to conduct a food safety risk analysis that identifies potential sources of contamination, identifies appropriate food safety controls, and documents those controls in a food safety plan.
- **Require Foreign Supplier Safety Plans and Build Foreign Capacity.** The Obama Administration should work with Congress to require every food importer to police their foreign suppliers and to build the capacity of foreign governments to regulate food safety. In particular, the Administration should work with Congress to require that food importers document the food safety measures and controls being implemented by their foreign suppliers, and to require food importers to make a foreign supplier food safety plan available to FDA.
- **Regulate Fruits and Vegetables.** The Obama Administration should work with Congress to give FDA the power to establish federal safety standards for certain fruits and vegetables—when risk and science demonstrate that standards are needed. FDA should be permitted to work with states to tailor standards to meet local growing conditions and to ensure that standards are being met.
- **Adopt a Risk-Based Approach to Inspections.** The Obama Administration should focus domestic and foreign inspections on facilities that pose the greatest risk of food-borne contamination. To focus scarce resources, FDA should permit expedited entry for imports that pose no meaningful risk.

- **Permit Mandatory Recalls.** The Obama Administration should work with Congress to give FDA the authority to order a mandatory recall when a company has refused to conduct a voluntary recall and there is a significant risk to public health. Specifically, where the responsible party refuses to voluntarily recall a product for which there is a reasonable probability that the food will cause serious adverse health consequences or death, the HHS Secretary should be permitted to order the company to conduct a recall.

Background

Americans enjoy one of the safest food supplies in the world, but food and beverage companies recognize that steps must be taken to make our food supply even safer. Ensuring the safety of our products—and maintaining the confidence of consumers—is the single most important goal of the food and beverage industry. Product safety is the foundation of consumer trust, and our industry devotes enormous resources to ensure that our products are safe.

Steadily increasing food imports and changing consumer preferences pose new challenges for food and beverage companies and for the Food and Drug Administration. In recent years, we have experienced dramatic changes in the volume and variety of food imports. The percent of food imported into the U.S. increased by nearly 40 percent between 1995 and 2005 to 15 percent of the U.S. food supply. In particular, roughly 60 percent of the fruits and vegetables and roughly 80 percent of seafood now consumed in the U.S. are imported.

To address the challenges posed by rising imports and changing consumer choices, food and beverage companies and federal and state agencies have placed continually greater emphasis on the prevention of food contamination. By constantly identifying and addressing the sources of contamination throughout each product's lifecycle, we reduce the risk of food-borne illness to consumers. We believe that the prevention of contamination—through the adoption of preventive controls—should continue to be the foundation of our nation's food safety strategies.



The **Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA)** represents the world's leading food, beverage and consumer products companies. The association promotes sound public policy, champions initiatives that increase productivity and growth and helps to protect the safety and security of the food supply through scientific excellence. The GMA board of directors is comprised of chief executive officers from the Association's member companies. The \$2.1 trillion food, beverage and consumer packaged goods industry employs 14 million workers, and contributes over \$1 trillion in added value to the nation's economy. For more information, visit the GMA website at www.gmaonline.org.

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