



Getting the Message!!



We all have a responsibility
for Food Safety
and the Public Trust



The First Signal!



1998 – FDA's Guide to Minimize the Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh Fruit & Vegetables



Risk Reduction



Marketplace begins to
interpret and demand



Birth of Third Party Audit Industry



Outbreaks continue
to be recurring



FDA initiates Produce Safety Action Plan



FDA communicates concern
to Lettuce and Tomato
industry groups



Florida Tomato industry
approaches USDA through
Federal Marketing Order



Florida Tomato industry
begins effort to regulate at the
state government level



North American Tomato Trade Working Group begins development of Tomato Specific Guidelines



T-GAPs and T-BMPs are formulated
with University of Florida,
State Regulatory Agency & FDA
based on “best available science”



May 2006 – NATTWG publishes
“Commodity Specific Food Safety
Guidelines for the Fresh Tomato
Supply Chain”



Fall 2006
Florida Tomato industry
voluntarily adopts
T-GAPs and T-BMPs



Fall 2006 – SPINACH CRISIS!!



2007 – Florida Legislature
grants authority to
Florida Commissioner of Agriculture
to regulate



June 2007 – FDA begins Tomato Food Safety Initiative in Virginia



Fall 2007-Spring 2008 –
FDA brings Tomato Food Safety
Initiative to Florida



Florida Tomato Food Safety Final rule becomes regulatory July 1, 2008



Florida Tomato industry has
become example of collaboration
& cooperation with FDA
and state government



THE CRISIS



May 22, 2008 –
New Mexico Dept. of Health
notified CDC about
4 persons infected with
Salmonella Saintpaul



Cases expand to Texas and Navajo nation



FDA attempts to learn
from spinach experience



May 30 – FDA reaches out
to industry groups



May 31
New Mexico Dept. of Health
issues press release with
narrow 3-4 state warning



June 7
FDA – CDC expand warning on
round and Roma tomatoes
“Nationwide”



Tomato movement slows,
stops, and implodes



National news media begins
“Food Safety Hysteria”



Traceback on tomatoes provides
no connection



Additional epidemiological data
leads to salsa
and jalapeño peppers



“Smoking peppers” found



Tomatoes
“possibly were a vehicle”



What Did We Learn?

- The Food Safety System Has Many Challenges
- The Public Is Confused
- The Media Can Make It a Circus



- No one is in Charge
- Preventative programs that Reduce Risk are needed
- Risk Communications Must Improve
- Knowledgeable Industry Input Is Important



Where Is Food Safety Going???



Everyone Is On the Same Team

- **Public Health and Public Confidence in the Food Supply is the Goal**



FLORIDA
TOMATOES

Thank You

