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# **Produce Safety and the Foodservice Industry**

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# NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

Northeast *E. coli* O157:H7

Lettuce Outbreak

Costs Taco Bell Corp.

**over \$20MM**



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## **Produce Safety is Enhanced with *Everyone's* Involvement**

- ❑ FDA, USDA, etc.
- ❑ Growers
- ❑ Processors
- ❑ Foodservice Operators
- ❑ Industry Partners (i.e. NRA)

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## **Collaboration is Key and Important**

Our purpose is to share best practices and lead the improvement of produce safety for everyone.



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## **Produce Safety starts with Strong Produce Suppliers**

- ❑ Ongoing focus to use only the best suppliers with strong programs
- ❑ Increased emphasis on supplier staffing, experience and their presence in the growing fields focused on prevention

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## **Produce Safety continues with Field Level Visits**

- ❑ Regular inspection of supplier programs
- ❑ Supplier demonstrates their field food safety programs
- ❑ Knowledge and the supplier's demonstration of programs builds confidence

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## ***E. coli* O157:H7 vs. Generic *E. coli* Testing Methodology**

When there is an *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak and there is a FDA trace back, here is what is evaluated:

- Finished product
  - At DC
  - At the Restaurant
- At our processor
  - Retain product
- At the growing field
  - Raw product (if available)
  - Soil/Compost
  - Irrigation water

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***E. coli* O157:H7 testing is not a panacea, but it will provide added field focus and another level of security, risk reduction and confidence. Prevention can be helpful especially at low contamination levels.**

### Enhanced Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

- ❑ Annual GAP audits
- ❑ Pre-harvest inspections
- ❑ Addition of elements from the Commodity Specific Lettuce and Leafy Green GAP Metrics (irrigation water testing, soil amendments testing, animal activity, field fencing, etc)
- ❑ Pre-harvest pathogen testing (*E. Coli* O157:H7, EHEC, Salmonella)

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**In addition to enhanced Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), we may be able to enhance Food Safety with enhanced Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)**

- ❑ Chlorine Effectiveness
- ❑ Other substrates
- ❑ Kill step
- ❑ Rapid *E. coli* O157:H7 Testing Method for testing Finished Product

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## Our Food Safety Programs constantly evolve; Areas that could yield greater Food Safety

- Enhance the Good Agricultural Practices
- Specific test for *E. coli* O157:H7 (versus or in addition to generic *E. coli*)
  - Soil
  - Compost
  - Irrigation water
  - Pre-harvest field testing
  - Finished product testing
- Enhance Chlorine effectiveness or other agents; alternative technologies at the processor
- Extension of produce safety to all produce commodities

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## Summary

- No One Requirement is Going to Prevent an Issue
- It is the Sum of Prevention, Cleansing and Testing Steps that is Key