Food Safety or Food Availability: Do We Have to Choose?

Timothy J. Jenkins, 1 Elizabeth A. Bihn, 2 Nathan M. Anderson, 3 Atef W. Idriss4 and Mary L. Tortorello3
1Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Statewide Health Improvement Initiatives
2Cornell University, Agriculture Experiment Station
3U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Division of Food Processing Science and Technology
4Mena Food Safety Associates (MEFOSA)

Abstract

Food safety and food availability are independent entities that can seem to be in opposition. Do we have to choose between them? Or are there ways to integrate them to provide safe, abundant, nutritious food? A safe and available food supply is considered a basic right of all individuals. Although the two goals of food safety and food availability must be met to protect and improve human health, food safety measures are likely to increase food costs and may decrease production of some foods. The International Association for Food Protection (IAFP) 2014 Annual Meeting featured a roundtable session on issues related to food safety and availability. This article summarizes the discussion and further elucidates current issues and future directions for meeting the challenges. Four questions are addressed: (1) What issues are at the core of the food safety/food availability debate? (2) What is currently being done with regard to food safety and food availability issues? (3) What more can be done to work toward both goals? (4) What are potential roles of IAFP members in addressing the issues?

Food Protection Trends January/February 2016

The study reported here in this Research Brief was not funded by the beef checkoff, but is made available to expand the usefulness of this checkoff-funded website for those interested in beef safety.