

Food Safety Alert – 11/30/06

While there are no media articles that relate to the E. coli outbreak today, there is one piece of commentary from Jim Prevor that I would like to share. The article discusses why a buyer-led food safety initiative may not be able to meet its goals. Prevor analyzes what Tim York, president of Markon Cooperative, recently said about federal regulation. He summarizes York's commentary to three main points: 1. That food safety protocols should be mandatory, national and have the force of law; 2. That it is the FDA's responsibility to determine what is safe and what is not; this is not the job of retailers; and 3. That the respect of the public, in America, for what the FDA and public health authorities say is a precious resource that should be protected. Prevor argues that if there was regulation, there would be no enforcement mechanism. If there were, then we would be creating a whole new class of criminal and we wouldn't be dealing with the real issue – food safety. Also, the FDA determining what is safe would have to appeal to both the producer and the buyer. Which would mean a baseline that wouldn't do anything to enhance the safety of food product. And finally, would the FDA be willing or even able to regulate the industry.

<http://www.perishablepundit.com/DailyPundit/2006/November/pundit061129-3.htm>