



SAFE FOOD COALITION

January 10, 2012

Dear President Obama,

Just over one year ago, you signed into law the most sweeping change in food safety law since the 1930s. The bi-partisan FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) shifts FDA's approach to food safety from reaction to prevention by giving it the authorities and tools it needs to better protect public health. Your strong support for this important law at every step of the legislative process was instrumental to its enactment, and today we are asking you to see that this landmark law fulfills its promise by ensuring that the FDA promptly issues proposals for the required new safeguards for the food supply.

A broad group of stakeholders ranging from the food industry to consumer, labor, and health organizations supported FSMA. The most powerful advocates were victims of foodborne disease and their families, who experienced first-hand the emotional and financial toll these illnesses can take, and know that strong food safety regulations can prevent others from suffering as they have.

The undersigned consumer and public health groups worked hard to get FSMA passed. But the real work -- implementing the law -- began the day after you signed the law, when FDA started to draft the dozens of regulations, guidances, and policy documents that it must develop and finalize over the next three years.

We are writing to ask you to release, in a timely, manner the proposed rules on produce safety, preventive controls for food and feed, and the Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP); the law, in fact, requires that the final FSVP rules and the proposed produce regulations be released by January 4, 2012. We have appreciated the many opportunities that FDA gave stakeholders to provide input into the development of these proposals.

We are eager to review and prepare comments on the proposals and help FDA ensure that strong safety regulations to protect American families and businesses are put in place.

Thank you again for your steadfast support.

American Public Health Association
Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Consumer Federation of America
Consumers Union
Food & Water Watch
National Consumers League
STOP Foodborne Illness
The Pew Charitable Trusts
Trust for America's Health