

Questions to Consider Before Implementing *Listeria* spp. Zone 1 Sampling in your Operation

Zone 1 sampling should not be a frightening experience for the facility – confidence comes in being prepared! It is equally as important to ensure that you have a strong environmental monitoring program (EMP) prior to embarking on Zone 1 testing. Consider the following questions below to help determine if your operation is ready to begin the journey:

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

- Are you familiar with the **United Fresh** and **FDA Guidance documents** for *Listeria* monitoring and control?
- Do you know the specific hazards associated with your product, and the history of *Listeria* or other pathogen risks?
- Has someone in your organization attended *Listeria*-specific or other EMP training?

OPERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- Do you have a documented history of Zone 2 and Zone 3 sampling in your operation?
- Do you have an understanding of your equipment cleanability, or the 'weaknesses' in your facility?
- Do you know where you'll target your Zone 1 sampling, and why?



COMMUNICATION

- Do you know who's on your support team for corrective action and root cause analysis communications in the event of a positive?
- Have you communicated your Zone 1 sampling plans to your entire operation?
- Have you discussed the financial aspects of Zone 1 sampling with upper management? Do you have their overall support?

STRATEGY

- Do you have a corrective action response plan in place in the event of a Zone 1 positive?
- Will you put your product on hold while waiting for the initial (routine) results of the Zone 1 swabs?

Zone 1
sampling

QUESTIONS?

Read the "**Zone 1 Sampling for *Listeria* spp. in Fresh Produce Operations**" guide on the United Fresh website, or contact **Dr. Emily Griep**, Manager, Food Safety, United Fresh Produce Association at 202-303-3401 or egriep@unitedfresh.org