

Charge to the Working Groups

International Lettuce and Leafy Greens Food Safety Research Conference

The major goal of this workshop is to develop a prioritized list of research needs to address the issue of *E. coli O157:H7*, *Salmonella* and other human pathogens in and on lettuce and leafy greens. Those invited to participate are experts and knowledgeable in the area and with limited time available, our efforts must be targeted to the major sectors of concern and interest.

The research prioritization should consider the following issues:

- Is the research identified a short or long term research objective
- Has the research already been conducted?
- Is this research reasonably likely to result in risk reduction?
- What are the practical and economic realities of implementing the results of this research?
- Which research sectors are best suited to working on this research?

Additional questions to consider are:

- Is there a public health impact of the research
- Can the specific problem or issue can be addressed quickly using existing technology
- Does the research proposed directly address an identified data gap

Research questions are to be addressed along the entire production, distribution, storage, processing, food service and retail chain. Key areas for consideration by the Working Group are:

- Sources of the pathogen in the environment
- Persistence of the pathogen in the environment
- Transference of the pathogen from the environment to the leafy green
- Persistence of the pathogen on or in the leafy green
- Microbiological detection methods and consideration of interventions including kill steps

The Working Group will be allotted approximately two hours on field preparation, production and harvest areas; one hour on post-harvest handling and processing and one hour on the distribution, retail, food service and consumer sector.

The attached list of previously identified research needs/ questions can serve as a starting point for the discussion. This list may not be complete, and may contain issues or questions that you do not consider important that do not need to be included in the final list from the group.

The key goal is to produce a manageable list of research needs, in priority order if possible, along with a brief (2 to 3 line) explanation of the expected impact or value of each. The lists produced by the four working groups will be combined into a single combined list by the group facilitators and presented by a Working Group representative to the entire group at the Plenary Session on the final day.