



## Safe Food for a Healthy Life

An Initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts at Georgetown University

**For Immediate Release**  
September 29, 2010

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# New Analysis of Major U.S. Trade Partners Shows Produce-Safety Regulatory Progress

(Washington, DC) – A number of major countries exporting fresh vegetables and fruit into the United States have modernized food-safety laws and regulations over the past two decades to emphasize preventive measures, according to new report released today by the Produce Safety Project (PSP) at Georgetown University.

The report, “Legal and Regulatory Frameworks Governing the Growing, Packing and Handling of Fresh Produce in Countries Exporting to the U.S.,” presents a series of case studies examining five of the top 10 U.S. produce trade partners – Canada, Chile, China, Mexico and Peru. The report was written by Monachus Consulting, an international agricultural industry consulting firm based in Canada.

“This report is particularly timely, as Congress considers food-safety reform legislation that includes provisions geared toward improving the safety of produce and imports in general,” said Jim O’Hara, director of the Produce Safety Project. “While the United States is considering whether to adopt food-safety rules for produce, many of our trading partners already have produce laws and regulations on the books that are intended to prevent contamination at the source – long before they reach the American consumer.”

Over the last two decades, the imports of fresh produce have grown substantially in the United States with other countries supplying U.S. consumers with billions of dollars of fresh fruits and vegetables each year, according to the report.

For the five countries analyzed, this report details:

- Types and quantity of produce exports to the United States;
- National food-safety systems (e.g. legislation, competent authorities, etc.);
- Domestic food-safety regulatory requirements for fresh produce production, packing and handling;

[www.ProduceSafetyProject.org](http://www.ProduceSafetyProject.org)

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- Export requirements for fresh produce production, packing and handling (if different from the domestic requirements); and,
- The role and scope of any significant private sector food-safety standards for fresh fruits and vegetables exports.

“In the early 1990s, many foreign governments responded to the series of food contamination incidents with the ‘first wave’ of new legislative and regulatory requirements,” said Albert F. Chambers, the report’s author. “Over the last decade, in addition to implementing legal reforms related to food-safety matters, many U.S. trade partners have also reorganized how food-safety policies and regulations are set.”

The study indicates that reform of food-safety oversight for countries exporting to the United States will continue to evolve. For example, Mexico, Peru and China have indicated that more regulations will be implemented in the coming years, and Canada and Chile indicated additional legislative measures are currently in process. The report highlights the limited available information on the implementation of these public and private initiatives.

To view the full report visit, [www.producesafetyproject.org](http://www.producesafetyproject.org).

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The Produce Safety Project at Georgetown University seeks the establishment by the Food and Drug Administration of mandatory and enforceable safety standards for domestic and imported fresh produce, from farm to fork. Our families need to have confidence that federal food safety regulation is based on prevention, scientifically sound risk assessment and management, and coordinated integrated data collection. For more information online, visit [www.producesafetyproject.org](http://www.producesafetyproject.org).