



## Safe Food for a Healthy Life

An Initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts at Georgetown University

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Statement of Jim O'Hara, Director, Produce Safety Project, in response to a new GAO report highlighting the need for improved FDA oversight of fresh produce:**

The General Accountability Office (GAO) just gave the presidential campaigns of John McCain and Barack Obama a critical required reading assignment with its new food safety report: "Improvements Needed in FDA Oversight of Fresh Produce."

The GAO found that the FDA lacks the critical resources necessary for protecting Americans' health when it comes to food safety. The lack of resources, resulting in too few inspections, too little enforcement and too many gaps in scientific research, is not new and clearly needs to be addressed.

More important is the need for political will to establish mandatory and enforceable safety standards for produce. A recent Produce Safety Project poll found 72% of likely voters supporting new federal regulations even if they raise the cost of fruits and vegetables.

Moving forward immediately on federal produce safety standards will be one of the first tests facing a new administration.

The GAO report is available at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d081047.pdf>

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*The Produce Safety Project at Georgetown University seeks the establishment of mandatory and enforceable standards governing the safety of domestic and imported produce, that apply from farm to fork. To give American families the confidence they deserve in the safety of the fresh fruits and vegetables necessary for healthy lives requires a federal food safety system with adequate resources that is based on prevention, scientifically sound risk assessment and management, and coordinated and integrated data collection. For more information online, visit [www.producesafetyproject.org](http://www.producesafetyproject.org)*

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