



United States  
Department of Agriculture

AUG 18 2009



United States  
Department of Health  
and Human Services

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing to express our support for the *Guidelines for Foodborne Disease Outbreak Response* recently issued by the Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR).

As you know, the *Guidelines* were developed in a collaborative process that brought together public health and food safety experts in an effort to aid Government agencies responsible for preventing and managing foodborne disease. The *Guidelines* are intended to harmonize and integrate as fully as possible the methods that public health and food regulatory officials use to detect, investigate, and control outbreaks and thus reduce the impact of foodborne illness.

We believe the *Guidelines* provide an important framework within which agencies at all levels can improve their response to foodborne disease outbreaks. We urge you to review your foodborne disease outbreak response process in light of the CIFOR recommendations, which are available at <http://www.cifor.us/projgl.cfm>.

In addition, we welcome your ideas about how the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other CIFOR members can help ensure the successful implementation of these recommendations. Please provide any comments or suggestions you may have, along with your contact information, to CIFOR (e-mail: [feedback@cifor.us](mailto:feedback@cifor.us)). CIFOR will be pleased to take your input into consideration as implementation strategies for the guidelines are determined.

We look forward to our continued cooperative work together to reduce foodborne illness and its impact on public health.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture

Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary of Health and  
Human Services