

America's Food Safety Agenda

Will it be the death of your business?



Where: The Victoria Inn, Embassy Rooms E & F
1808 Wellington Avenue, Winnipeg

When: Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Time: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

On February 5, 2009, U.S. Senator Tom Harkin, Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry held a hearing on the issue of food safety. Here are a couple of excerpts of what he said during his opening remarks regarding food safety:

"I am nothing short of outraged at the increasing number of outbreaks of food-borne illness in this country."

"When Americans can't count on the safety of basic items that go into our children's lunch boxes, then we are in big trouble."

"There are 76 million cases of food-borne illness annually in the U.S., resulting in 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths. Those statistics would be disturbing anywhere in the world. They are totally intolerable in the United States of America."

In the opinion of Ezzeddine Boutrif, chief of food quality in the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization's food and nutrition division, "food safety has become a political agenda" and "no government will accept that it cannot protect its own people because of a food safety problem."

Firms that become tarred with food safety concerns risk catastrophic damage as was the case with Peanut Corporation of America, which is one of America's largest peanut processors. After its salmonella outbreak, the firm filed for bankruptcy.

All of these deaths, illnesses, and hospitalizations have spurred the U.S. Congress into considering the creation of a new Food Safety Administration. Add the fact that the U.S. is now under a unified government with the Executive branch and Congress both under Democratic control for first time since 1994, and the ability to enact change has been significantly augmented.

As America's largest trading partner, Canada stands to feel a disproportionate burden of any new changes emanating from Washington regarding food safety and traceability.

We think this is going to impact your business and want to discuss the potential challenges and how you can protect your market access as well as your customer base in the United States. Deloitte has partnered with the global law firm of Hogan & Hartson, LLP and the Guelph Food Technology Centre to develop a leading edge analysis on what we think the future holds.

About the speakers

Moderated by:

- **Richard Olfert, FCA**, is a Partner in the Winnipeg office of Deloitte, focused on providing both audit and advisory services to Deloitte's most significant clients. He recently completed a six year term as the Office Managing Partner, during which the office grew from 150 to 200 people. As an Advisory Partner, he helps organizations address their business challenges, particularly related to growth and governance.

Key speakers will include:

- **Mark McConnell, B.A., J.D., M.B.A.**, is a U.S. trade lawyer from Hogan & Hartson based in Washington, D.C. and represents a broad range of clients in international trade litigation and government policy matters.

He is one of the leading international trade litigators in Washington, D.C., having won a number of high profile actions in the last decade. Some of the trade disputes Mark has been involved in include:

- successfully defending Canadian swine producers in the Live Swine from Canada antidumping and countervailing duty investigations;
- successfully defending the Canadian greenhouse tomato industry in the Greenhouse Tomatoes from Canada antidumping investigation.
- **Frank Schreurs, B.Sc.**, is Vice-President, Food Safety & Quality Services at the GFTC in Guelph, Ontario. He leads a team of food safety professionals in the delivery of consulting, quality management, auditing services and training to all industry sectors, from farm to fork.
- **Jack Slibar, B.A., M.B.A.**, leads Deloitte's new national agri-business consulting service practice. He has developed deep experience within the agri-business sector. Jack has extensive expertise in the areas of international trade, regulatory regimes, political risk assessment, business intelligence systems & analysis, crisis management, and organizational turnaround initiatives.

Please RSVP to lhumeniuk@deloitte.ca or call (204) 944-3643.

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