

Charge to the Working Groups

The two goals of this workshop are to develop a prioritized list of research needed to address the issue of Salmonella and other human pathogens in and on tomatoes and to develop a proposed platform for on-going research coordination and communication.

The research prioritization should consider the following issues:

- The relative public health impact of the research
- Whether a specific problem or issue can be addressed quickly using existing technology
- Whether the information, techniques, or results of one research project are needed before other research can be done
- Whether the research directly addresses identified data gaps
- Whether the research addresses a regional or national problem
- The difficulty and cost of implementing any solutions or changes in practice that might result from the work

Issues along the entire production, distribution, storage, processing, food service and retail chain should be considered.

The attached list of previously identified research needs 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 goal is to produce a manageable list of research needs in priority order, along with a brief (2 to 3 line) explanation of the expected impact or value of each. The lists produced by the two working groups will be combined into a single combined list.

Prioritization of research needs is, in itself, not useful if there is no ongoing mechanism for communication and coordination among the research community, or for communication between the researchers and the funding agencies, the regulatory authorities, and producers. Therefore, secondarily, we are asking each working group to consider ways to ensure that such communication and coordination takes place. This might involve establishing new communication channels, or developing better ways to coordinate among existing efforts. A focused coordinated effort is important to ensure that the results of this workshop and the ongoing research remain effective and efficient.

As first step in promoting improved communication and coordination, the presentations, research bibliographies, and background documents from the November meeting have been posted at <http://research.ifas.ufl.edu>. The presentations and results from this meeting will be available at <http://www.jifsan.umd.edu>.