

## **12<sup>th</sup> Annual Fera/JIFSAN Symposium**

### **Dealing with Uncertainty in Risk-Based Decision Making and Response**

#### **Symposium Aims and Objective**

This is the twelfth in a series of annual symposia on food safety and applied nutrition jointly organized by the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), UK, and the Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN), University of Maryland, College Park. Each year a different theme is selected. This year's symposium focuses on uncertainty in risk based decisions, communication and response.

The increasingly global nature of the food supply presents new challenges for assuring food safety and for responding to emergency situations. During the past two decades there has been a tremendous effort throughout the international food safety community to make decisions that are science-based; risk-based; transparent and consistent. Food safety risk managers need to make decisions on a daily basis in the face of uncertainty. Understanding the sources of these uncertainties within the information provided to the risk managers is an integral part of the decision making process. It provides a means of communicating effectively the public health and economic impact of a given decision to stakeholders.

The focus of the 2011 Annual Fera/JIFSAN Joint Symposium will be on dealing with uncertainty in risk-based decision making and response. The meeting will provide an overview of the sources and characterization of uncertainty, and consideration when making food safety decisions and communication. Invited speakers will be drawn from regulatory agencies, public interest groups, universities and research institutions in Europe and North America. Symposium sessions will include discussions on sources of uncertainty, tools for characterizing uncertainty, and new methods and models for reducing uncertainty during data collection. Contributed poster presentations are invited.