



Consumer Federation of America

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 14, 2015

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FURTHER PROGRESS NEEDED TO REDUCE FOODBORNE ILLNESS, ACCORDING TO NEW DATA FROM CDC

Washington D.C.—Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today demonstrated that little progress has been made in recent years on reducing illnesses from the major foodborne pathogens. The new data show a decrease in illnesses from *E. coli* O157:H7 but for illnesses from other pathogens like *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*, there has been virtually no change.

“It’s been the same refrain for years now,” said Chris Waldrop, director of the Food Policy Institute at Consumer Federation of America. “We continue to see very little progress on reducing foodborne illness. We need to take stronger action.”

Compared to a baseline period of 2011-2013, the preliminary data from 2014 show a decrease in illnesses from *E. coli* O157:H7. But the data show no significant change in illnesses from most other pathogens, including *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* and *Listeria*. Troublingly, the 2014 data show an increase in illnesses from other Shiga-toxin producing strains of *E. coli* (non-O157 STECs), though that could partially be attributed to greater surveillance for those strains.

Salmonella continues to be a [major problem](#). Recent efforts by the Food Safety and Inspection Service to adopt new standards for poultry parts and require plants to address *Salmonella* in their food safety plans may help, but it is too early to tell. FSIS could take additional steps such as declaring certain antibiotic-resistant strains of *Salmonella* as adulterants and adopting the recommendations in a [recent CFA report](#).

Effective implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act may help reduce future illnesses by requiring food processing companies and farms to take steps to prevent food from becoming contaminated. The Food and Drug Administration is required by a court order to finalize its regulations under the new law beginning in August 2015. Congress can help ensure the law is effective by providing the FDA with increased resources.

Consumer Federation of America is a nonprofit association of more than consumer organizations founded in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, education and advocacy.