

# IFSH Sprout Safety Task Force Update

# IFSH Sprout Safety Task Force

- Formed in 2009
- Objectives:
  - Increase industry implementation of FDA sprout safety guidelines
  - Address critical research needs to reduce microbial hazards in sprouts
  - Share information
    - Sprout Task Force Meeting, August 15, 2024
    - Seed Safety Conference, August 13-14, 2024

# Sprout Task Force Meeting Agenda

CDT	THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024
8:30 – 8:45	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> <b>Carmen Wakeling</b> , Owner, Eatmore Sprouts; President, International Sprout Growers Association (ISGA); Chair, IFSH Sprout Task Force <b>Tong-Jen Fu, Ph.D.</b> , Research Chemical Engineer, Office of Food Safety, U.S. Food and Drug Administration; Co-Chair, IFSH Sprout Task Force
8:45 – 9:15	<b>Regulatory Updates</b> <b>Patricia Homola, Ph.D.</b> , Consumer Safety Officer, Office of Food Safety, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
9:15 – 9:45	<b>Safety, Issues and Emerging Opportunities</b> <b>Carmen Wakeling</b> , Owner, Eatmore Sprouts & Greens, Ltd., President, ISGA
9:45 – 10:15	<b>Overview of Sprout-Associated Outbreaks and Highlights of the FDA Traceability Rule</b> <b>Asma Madad, MS, MPH, CPH</b> , Biologist, CORE, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
10:15 – 10:30	<b>Sprout Safety Alliance – An Update</b> <b>Yuqiao Jin, PhD</b> , SSA Coordinator, Institute for Food Safety and Health (IFSH)
BREAK 10:30 – 10:40 AM	

# Sprout Task Force Meeting Agenda (Cont'd)

CDT	THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024
10:40 – 11:10	<b>Technology Highlight: The Dry and Automated Decontamination of Seeds by Cold Plasma</b> <b>Cody Vild, PhD</b> , Vice President, Product, Clean Crop Technologies
11:10 – 11:40	<b>CFSAN Research Update: Metagenomics Analysis of Microbial Communities in Sprouts and Seeds for Hydroponically Grown Lettuce</b> <b>Taylor Richter, PhD</b> , Office of Applied Research and Safety Assessment, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
11:40 – 12:00	<b>IFSH Research: Dry-Heat Treatment in Reducing <i>Salmonella</i> and <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 Contamination on Alfalfa Seeds</b> <b>Arlette Shazer, MS</b> , Research Microbiologist, Office of Food Safety, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
ADJOURN	

Conference on

# Ensuring the Safety of Seeds for Sprouting and Other Applications

August 13-14, 2024

Chicago Marriott Southwest at Burr Ridge

**ILLINOIS TECH**



# Seed Safety Conference

- Sponsored by CFSAN
- Organized by IFSH in collaboration with CFSAN and the ISGA
- Background
  - The safety of seeds plays a critical role in the safety of sprouts
  - Sprout growers in the US source their seeds globally
  - Working with stakeholders around the world to ensure seeds intended for sprouting are produced and processed in a way that minimizes microbial contamination does meet CFSAN's program goal

# Scope

- Best practices for the production, processing and distribution of seeds for sprouting across the global supply chain
- Seed sourcing and preventive measures implemented by growers to reduce food safety hazards in seeds used for sprout and CEA production
- Risk management approaches taken by regulatory agencies in different regions of the world
- Knowledge gaps and research needs

# Agenda

*Day 1, August 14, 2024*

## **Opening Remarks**

*Girvin Liggans, PhD, REHS, DAAS, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, USA*

*Jason Wan, PhD, Institute for Food Safety and Health, USA*

## **Part I: Seeds for Sprouting, CEA and Other Applications: Production Practices and Risk Profiles**

*Chair: Tong-Jen Fu, PhD, U.S. Food and Drug Administration*

### **Microbiological Risk Profiles of Germinated Seeds, Sprouts, Microgreens, and Baby Leaf Grown Under Controlled Environmental Agriculture**

*Keith Warriner, PhD, University of Guelph, Canada*

### **Overview of 2012-2021 Sprout-Associated Outbreaks**

*Asma Madad, MS, MPH, CPH, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, USA*

### **Seed Production, Harvest, Processing, Handling, and Distribution - A Food Safety Focus**

*Trevor Suslow, PhD, University of California, Davis (Retired), USA*

### **Seed Matters? Perspectives on Sprouts and Microgreens Safety Associated with Seeds**

*Zhenlei Xiao, PhD, University of Connecticut, USA*

### **Food Safety Considerations for Seeds Used in Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Production**

*Melanie Yelton, PhD, GrowBig CEA Consultants, USA*



# Agenda (Cont'd)

## Part II: A Global View of Best Practices for the Production, Processing and Distribution of Seeds for Sprouting and CEA Production

*Chair: Jason Wan, PhD., Institute for Food Safety & Health*

### **Ensuring the Safety of Seeds for Sprouting: a US Seed Supplier's Perspective**

*Corey Caudill, Caudill Sprouting, USA*

### **Production and Processing Practices of Seeds for Sprouting: A European's Perspective**

*Elisa Ricci, Suba Seed Company, Italy*

### **Production and Processing of Mung Beans Destined for Sprouting**

*Lucy Lin, Dalian Taijin Trading Co, China*

### **Best Practices in the Production, Processing and Distribution of Seeds for Sprouting: A Seed Supplier's Perspective**

*Xi Wang, Evers Specials, Netherlands*

### **Best Practices in Ensuring the Safety of Organic Seeds**

*Lisa Mumm, Mumm's Sprouting Seeds, Canada*

### **Novel Seed Treatment Technologies Applicable for Seed Suppliers: Hydroxyl Radical Based Treatments for Enhancing Food Safety and Shelf Life of Sprouts & Microgreens Produced Under CEA**

*Paul Moyer, Clean Works, Canada*

# Agenda (Cont'd)

*Day 2, August 14, 2024*

## **Part III: Seed Sourcing and Preventive Measures for Sprout and CEA Production**

*Chair: Carmen Wakeling, International Sprout Growers Association*

### **Best Practices for Vetting Seed Suppliers and Ensuring the Safety of Seeds for Sprouting**

*Dessa Hix, International Specialty Supply, USA*

### **A Canadian Organic Grower's Perspective on Seed Sourcing for Quality and Food Safety**

*Carmen Wakeling, Eatmore Sprouts & Greens Ltd., Canada*

### **Best Practices to Ensure the Safety of Seeds Intended for Sprouting – A European Perspective**

*Sanne Appelman, Van der Plas Sprouts, Netherlands*

### **From Seed to Safety: Successfully Innovating for a New Era in Food Safety**

*Susan Harlander, PhD, RaFoods, USA*

### **Seed Sourcing and Microbial Testing of Sprout Production Batches**

*Liz Reilley, Jonathan Sprouts, USA*

### **Sourcing Safe Seeds for CEA Production- A Grower's Perspective**

*Brian Hannon, Seedway, USA*

# Agenda (Cont'd)

## Part IV: Risk Management Approaches by Government Agencies

*Chair: Patricia Homola, PhD, U.S. Food and Drug Administration*

### **US FDA Guidance and Policy Related to Seed for Sprouting**

*Patricia Homola, PhD, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, USA*

### **EU Regulations on the Production of Sprouts and Imports of Seeds for Sprouting**

*Jelle Kuijper, Evers Specials, Netherlands*

### **USDA Export Certification Program for Seeds Destined for Sprouting**

*Carrie Sayasithsena, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, USA*

### **Highlights of the FDA Food Traceability Rule**

*Asma Madad, MS, MPH, CPH, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, USA*

### **Group Discussion – Next Step**

# Key Takeaways

- US regulations applicable to sprout operations
  - Produce Safety Rule (does not apply to seed suppliers/distributors)
  - Food Traceability Rule
- Seed distributors play an important role in educating farmers, seed processors and sprout growers to follow food safety best practices
- Sprout growers are aware of food safety risks associated with seeds and have implemented control measures to reduce risks
- Sprouts no longer on the list of Top 10 Riskiest Foods

## Key Takeaways (Cont'd)

- EU legislations for sprouts and seeds intended for sprout production
  - No 208/2013 traceability requirements for sprouts and seeds
  - No 209/2013 microbiological criteria for sprouts
  - No 210/2013 approval of establishments producing sprouts
  - No 211/2013 certification requirements for imported sprouts and seeds
- For seed suppliers in the country or origin
  - Dedicated seed production from sowing to harvesting and processing
  - Seeds are produced/processed/handled according to GHP, GAP, and GMP
  - Competent authorities (CA) control the supply chain and issue the import certification
- For sprout growers in the EU
  - Sprouting companies need to be approved by the CA
  - Only seed lots accompanied by import certification signed by local CA are allowed to be used for sprout production
  - Each seed lot is tested by sprout growers for pathogens before being used for sprout production

**Questions?**