

RFA Food Safety Resources



The Refrigerated Foods Association maintains a library of specialized food safety and regulatory research projects and informational resources. These resources are available to RFA members at no extra charge.

Scroll down for a list of technical projects and materials currently available through the RFA.

RFA Members: [Log in](#) now and visit the [Food Safety Resources](#) page in the Member Center for a full list of resources available - many are available to download directly from the web site!

RFA Technical Hotline

Technical Hotline - Call the RFA Office at 678-426-8175, or email us at info@refrigeratedfoods.org to get answers

your tech nical
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ns and expert advice on food safety and regulatory issues.

[RFA President's Interview](#) on *Refrigerated & Frozen Foods' From The Cold Corner* Podcast

RFA Technical & Research Projects

The following projects are organized by date, starting with the most recent:

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RFA Food Safety Training for Experienced Employees DVD Program (2010) - This RFA Training DVD program will introduce your experienced employees to advanced food safety principles and test their knowledge after training. RFA Member companies receive one copy free of charge. Click

[here](#)

and

[here](#)

for more information on the DVD and how to get your copy!

- **White Paper: FDA and USDA Records Access and Environmental Monitoring** (May, 2014)

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Shelf Life Protocol Study (2009, 2019)

The RFA Shelf Life Protocol establishes a standardized protocol for determining the shelf life of refrigerated foods and enables individual manufacturers to compare their stated shelf life with the shelf life of similar products produced by other manufacturers. Originally developed in 2002, the RFA Protocol has been newly updated and revised to reflect important regulatory and technological changes that have occurred since that time. Utilization of the protocol is an

important step in assurance of the quality and safety of refrigerated foods and in meeting compliance with anticipated regulatory changes.

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NOTE: The full 2009/2019 **RFA Shelf Life Protocol Report** is available to members and non-members free of charge. Please send an e-mail to info@refrigeratedfoods.org requesting the RFA Shelf Life Protocol Report. Please be sure to include your name, company and contact information.

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2008 RFA Technical Project - Part 1: The Safety of Fresh and Fresh-cut Produce in the Refrigerated Salad Industry

This is a guidance document detailing the microbial safety of four fresh vegetables – cabbage, carrots, celery, and onions – that are used as ingredients in refrigerated, ready-to-eat (RTE) salad products.

The following documents have been prepared to address these issues:

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(1) Literature Review of the Microbial Risks

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(2) Best Practices for Produce Safety in a Refrigerated Salad Processing Plant - This document is designed to discuss "Best Practices" that can be implemented by processors to reduce pathogen contamination of refrigerated salad products. The guidelines in this document provide guiding practices for processors to enhance the quality and safety of refrigerated salad products. Given that there are major gaps in our understanding of how raw materials become contaminated, the practices described in this document are the best information presently available.

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2008 RFA Technical Project - Part 2: The Evaluation of “Vegetable Treatments” in Maintaining the Safety of Produce Used in Manufacturing (2008) - As the fresh-cut produce market continues to grow, the processors and users of such produce are faced with the challenge of processing in a manner that ensures the safety of this produce. From 1996 to 2006, seventy-two foodborne illness outbreaks were associated with the consumption of fresh produce. Of these produce related outbreaks, 25 percent (18 outbreaks) implicated fresh-cut produce. If pathogens are present when the surface integrity of the fruit or vegetable is broken, pathogen growth can occur and contamination may spread. In addition, the degree of handling and product mixing common to many ready to eat food processing operations can provide opportunities for contamination and for spreading contamination through a large volume of product. Given the needs of the RFA member, the Association sponsored a project to help members utilize fresh produce safely.

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RFA Training DVD (2007) - Created and produced by the RFA Technical Committee and RFA Technical Director Martin Mitchell, this RFA Training DVD covers critical topics and tasks to help refrigerated plant workers ensure food safety. Trainers can use the DVD to create awareness and then discuss plant-specific policies and procedures. RFA Members receive one copy free of charge. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for more information on the DVD and how to get your copies!

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RFA inquiry regarding USDA/FSIS Inspection Policy and Notification: At the request of several RFA Members, RFA Technical Director Martin Mitchell sent an official inquiry to the FSIS Technical Service Center on April 2, 2007, regarding their sampling policy.

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The Evaluation of “Novel Anti-Microbials” in Maintaining the Safety and Shelf-Life of Refrigerated Foods (2006)

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In recent years, several companies have developed products that are proposed as effective anti-listerial compounds that prevent the rapid and prolific out growth of listeria in refrigerated food products. In order to help RFA members better understand the marketplace and judge the efficacy of the various products, the RFA Technical Committee designed a study that evaluated several of these preservative systems for their bacterial effectiveness against Listeria and other spoilage organisms. The study involved three different models of commercially prepared, refrigerated food products that were inoculated with both a Listeria cocktail and other select spoilage organisms and then treated with the appropriate amount of various preservatives. Over the shelf life of the products, the fate of the listeria as well as the spoilage organisms was determined. This report contains the complete data of the evaluation. (Available through the RFA Office)

Food Safety Magazine article by Martin Mitchell about the above study: "The Evaluation of Novel Antimicrobial Ingredients in Maintaining the Safety and Shelf-life of Refrigerated Foods", April/May 2006 ([PDF File](#))

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FDA Food Inspection Manual (2004)

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[RFA Technical Resource Archives](#)

Additional RFA Technical Resources

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RFA Technical E-News - An email newsletter containing the latest food safety and regulatory news affecting the industry. Sent bi-weekly.

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RFA Technical Resources Update - What has the RFA done for you lately? Click the following links to download PDF file of the new [2023-2024 Technical](#)

[Resource Update Brochure](#)

as well as the past brochures. (Note: These are PDF files and require Adobe Acrobat Reader to view)

- [2020-2022 Technical Resource Update Brochure](#)
- [2019-2020 Technical Resources Update Brochure](#)
- [2018-19 Technical Resources Update Brochure](#)
- [2016-2017 Technical Resources Update Brochure](#)

- **RFA Technical Surveys** - The Technical Committee has begun conducting occasional surveys of the RFA membership to find out more about certain food safety practices. Results are available to members in the Member Center and include summary of findings and full results.

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Plant & Occupational Safety Handbook (1990)

- **Refrigerated Foods Association Recall Manual** (1997)
- **IFT Report on Food Allergies and Other Food Sensitivities** (2001)

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Trade publication article: ["More Than a Test: Foodborne illness issues affect processors, vendors at all levels"](#)

from the October 2006 issue

- *Refrigerated & Frozen Foods* magazine article

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Food Allergens: Recognition and Control of the Hazard (April 2010)

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Supplier Approval for Food Safety (Fe