

Abstract:

Although some of the apparent increase in food-borne illnesses associated with fresh produce is likely a result of better surveillance and reporting, there does appear to be a real increase in the number of cases. However, this does not necessarily mean that there is an absolute increase in the likelihood of any individual fresh produce item causing illness. Rather, increased consumption of fresh produce, diverse sources and complex distribution systems, the sources and types of food-borne pathogens, and demographic and societal changes we are experiencing combine to increase the risk of encountering a food-borne disease. However, solutions do exist and fresh produce can be made safer with appropriate research, technology, and education.