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CONTACT: Aaron Huertas; ahuertas@ucsusa.org, 202-331-5458

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION TO RELEASE NEW FOOD SAFETY RULES
SURVEY OF FDA SCIENTISTS FOUND LINGERING WORRIES ABOUT AGENCY'S ABILITY TO
PROTECT FOOD SUPPLY

WASHINGTON (January 4, 2012) – After a year of delay, the Food and Drug Administration is releasing new food safety rules today that will cover fruit and vegetable farms and food processors. The rules were held up at the White House Office of Management and Budget, which has long been a source of delay and interference in science-based federal policymaking under multiple administrations.

In March 2012, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) released [results from a survey](#) it conducted of scientists at the FDA, some of whom deal with food safety. The survey demonstrated that a significant number of scientists working closely on food safety were worried that the agency could not adequately protect the American public from tainted food products.

Ninety-eight FDA scientists who work at its Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition responded to the survey, though not every respondent answered every question.

Close to half of the FDA scientists who responded felt that the agency lacked the resources to fully implement the food safety law.

Less than 40 percent of the FDA food safety scientists – 33 out of 86 scientists – were mostly or completely confident in the agency's ability to ensure the safety of fruits and vegetables. About 53 percent – 45 out of 85 scientists – were mostly or completely confident regarding the safety of processed foods.

These regulations still must undergo more review and a public comment period before they are implemented. This survey and a previous one indicated that FDA scientists see significant levels of corporate interference in the agency's work. According to UCS, it is crucial that special interests do not use the regulatory process to further delay or weaken the food safety rules.

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