

extraordinary contributions to science and technology and have played a vital role in the unprecedented prosperity and economic growth we have experienced in recent years.

The great French scientist Louis Pasteur noted more than a century ago that “science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.” During Global Science and Technology Week, America joins the world community in celebrating the immeasurable benefits we have enjoyed from international scientific collaboration and looks forward to a future of even greater achievements.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 7 to May 13, 2000, as Global Science and Technology Week. I call upon students, educators, and all the people of the United States to learn more about the international nature of science and technology and the contributions that international scientists have made to our Nation’s progress and prosperity.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 11. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President’s Radio Address

May 6, 2000

Good morning. Warm weather has finally taken hold in most of the country, and millions of families are now taking weekend picnics and hosting backyard barbecues. Today I want to speak with you about the foods we serve at these gatherings and how we can make them even safer than they already are.

Our food supply is the most bountiful in the world. And for 7 years now, our administration has been committed to making it the safest in the world. We’ve improved dramatically the Nation’s inspection system for meat, poultry, and seafood. We’ve added new safeguards to protect families from unsafe imported foods. We’ve established a sophisticated early warning system that uses DNA fingerprinting techniques to detect and prevent outbreaks of foodborne illness. From farm to table, we’ve made great strides to ensure the safety of our food supply. But outbreaks of food-related illnesses are still far too prevalent. In fact, millions of Americans get sick from eating contaminated food each year.

One threat we must address immediately comes from a foodborne pathogen called *Listeria*, which has been the cause of recent recalls of hot dogs and luncheon meats and several deadly outbreaks of disease. The most famous case emerged a year and a half ago, when *Listeria* killed 21 people and sickened 100 others, all of whom had eaten contaminated meat from a single plant. It was the Nation’s most deadly food safety epidemic in 15 years.

Fortunately, *Listeria* is less common than *salmonella*, *E. coli*, and other foodborne bacteria, but unfortunately, it is far more dangerous. A staggering 20 percent of *Listeria* infections result in death. As with other foodborne bacteria, it’s rarely healthy adults who come down with *Listeria* infections. Instead, it’s the most vulnerable among us: infants, the elderly, pregnant women, and those whose immune systems have been weakened by chemotherapy or AIDS.

While our administration has already taken a number of important steps to reduce the threat of *Listeria*, it’s clear we must do more to protect Americans from this deadly pathogen. So today I’m directing the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services to prepare an aggressive new strategy to significantly reduce the risk of illness from *Listeria*. As part of this strategy, we will propose new regulations to require scientific

approaches, such as systematic testing for *Listeria* at food-processing plants, not just random checks. This and other measures will allow us to cut in half the number of *Listeria*-related illnesses over the next 5 years and save well over 1,000 lives.

Today I call on the food industry to work with us as we develop our new *Listeria* strategy. And I call on Congress to help us strengthen food safety across the board. Just this week, unfortunately, the Congress took a major step backward by refusing to fully fund our food safety initiative. In fact, they've now voted to block funding for our new efforts to protect millions of American families from the dangers of *salmonella* poisoning in eggs. We should be doing more, not less, to ensure the safety of our food.

If we work together, we can make real gains this year. We can increase the number of inspections of domestic and imported foods. We can expand the FDA's authority to turn away imported food that does not meet our high safety standards. And at long last, we can give the Department of Agriculture the authority to recall bad food and impose civil penalties for repeat violations. After all, the Department has the right to penalize a circus to protect animals from harm; it's about time we gave them the tools they need to protect human beings from harm, too.

Ensuring the safety of our food and the health of our people are among the most important parts of our citizens' basic contract with their Government. For the sake of millions of Americans, especially the most vulnerable among us, it's an obligation we simply must work together to uphold.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:47 p.m. on May 5 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Reducing the Risk of *Listeria Monocytogenes*

May 5, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Health and Human Services

*Subject: Reducing the Risk of *Listeria Monocytogenes**

Food safety is a vital issue for all Americans. When people across this country sit down to a meal at home or in a restaurant, they expect that the food they eat will be safe. While the U.S. food supply is abundant, the marketplace has evolved from one dominated by minimally processed basic commodities for home preparation to one with an array of highly processed products that are ready-to-eat or require minimal preparation in the home.

To take account of the changes in the way Americans eat and to ensure that America's food supply remains safe, my Administration has made wide-ranging, dramatic improvements in food safety. We have worked successfully to revolutionize our meat and poultry inspection system, instituting scientific testing and pathogen reduction controls to target and reduce dangerous pathogens like *Salmonella* and *E. coli* O157:H7 and the illnesses they cause. We also have implemented an innovative system of preventative controls for the seafood industry, published industry guidance to improve the safety of fruits and vegetables, and taken steps to prevent unsafe imported foods from reaching American consumers. My Food Safety Initiative is now in its third year of improving food safety surveillance, outbreak response, education, research, and inspection. In 1998, I issued an Executive Order creating the President's Council on Food Safety (Council), which oversees Federal food safety research efforts and is currently developing a comprehensive, national food safety strategic plan. It is under the Council's auspices that my Administration produced last year an Egg