

 regular page**Industry News - AM****U of Fla. researchers unveil riskiest food-pathogen combos****By Lisa M. Keefe on 4/27/2011**

Researchers at the University of Florida Emerging Pathogens Institute have identified the 10 riskiest combinations of foods and disease-causing microorganisms, the Institute said in a news release.

Its report, "Ranking the Risks: The 10 Pathogen-Food Combinations with the Greatest Burden on Public Health," lists the number of illnesses, costs and overall public health burden of specific microbes in particular types of food.

The food-pathogen combinations were ranked according to annual short- and long-term costs, and also by the loss of quality adjusted life years (QALYs), a standardized measure used in public health to assess pain, suffering, and other impacts to quality of life. The list includes:

- Campylobacter in poultry — costs \$1.3 billion a year
- Toxoplasma in pork — costs \$1.2 billion a year
- Listeria in deli meats — costs \$1.1 billion a year
- Salmonella in poultry — costs \$700 million a year
- Listeria in dairy products — costs \$700 million a year
- Salmonella in complex foods — costs \$600 million a year
- Norovirus in complex foods — costs \$900 million a year
- Salmonella in produce — costs \$500 million a year
- Toxoplasma in beef — costs \$700 million a year
- Salmonella in eggs — costs \$400 million a year

"The number of hazards and scale of the food system make for a critical challenge for consumers and government alike," said Michael Batz, lead author of the report and head of Food Safety Programs at the Emerging Pathogens Institute. "Government agencies must work together to effectively target their efforts. If we don't identify which pairs of foods and microbes present the greatest burden, we'll waste time and resources and put even more people at risk."

The report was supported by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. For a copy of the report, visit the [Emerging Pathogens Institute website](#).

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