Caramel Apples

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The Problem

- *Listeria monocytogenes* outbreak
- Caramel apples identified as food item of interest
- CA had one death associated with the outbreak
Samples

- Hundreds of samples collected
  - Environmental swabs
  - Ingredients
  - Plastic clam shell packaging
  - Wooden sticks
Actions

• Recalls
• Environmental investigation at Happy Apples
• Retail Surveillance Sampling
Critical Factors

- Holding temperature requirements
- Stick vs. no stick
Teachable Moment

• Firms do not understand:
  – how we perform outbreak investigations
  – how we come up with their company or product
  – investigation is as much about “ruling out” as “ruling in”
We are good at:

• Identifying the problem
• Identifying the firm and product
• Initiating action (recall, embargo, etc.)
• Getting the issue resolved for THAT firm
Sharing with Industry

- Web postings?
- Fact sheet?
- Dear Industry letters?
- Presentations at conferences?
- Meetings with industry associations?
- Other???
Contact Information

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