

Food Safety

Frozen Food Safety May Be Hot Research Topic

(NAPSA)—From pizza to peas—and everything in between—frozen food has brought taste, nutrition and convenience to the consumer's kitchen.

Freezing is actually a rather old technique for preserving food. It does this by halting the activities of microorganisms that can cause food to spoil.

Frozen foods have a strong track record of food safety. Now, a noted scientist is suggesting that with additional research, freezing technology may be able to offer consumers even more safety in food preparation and perhaps prevent certain threats to the health of consumers and their families, such as salmonella.

According to a report by Douglas L. Archer, Ph.D., published in the *International Journal of Food Microbiology*, more research could help create a freezing battle plan to aid public health.

Said Archer, "It is clear that under certain conditions, freezing can be lethal for certain food-borne pathogens. It also seems clear that there are researchable areas that might lead to increased use of freezing as a barrier to food-borne pathogens."

Archer is a past deputy director of the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Currently, he is a professor in the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department of the University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.

The paper suggests a number of avenues for research, such as the temperatures and rates at which foods are frozen, storage times and temperatures, and the chemical



Experts say that with additional research, freezing could be used more extensively as a food safety technology.

makeup of the foods, which may lead to improved techniques and technology from which consumers may benefit.

Archer also notes the characteristics of specific microorganisms, and their unique interactions with various foods.

"Frozen foods have earned a reputation for safety. Advanced research could take this reputation for safety to a new level of reliability that redefines the possibilities of food safety. This is an opportunity and a call to action for the scientific community," said Leslie G. Sarasin, president and chief executive officer of the American Frozen Food Institute.

AFFI is the national trade association representing all aspects of the frozen food industry supply chain, from manufacturers to distributors to suppliers to packagers; the Institute is industry's voice on issues crucial to future growth and progress.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.affi.com.