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Voter survey shows strong support for food safety mandates

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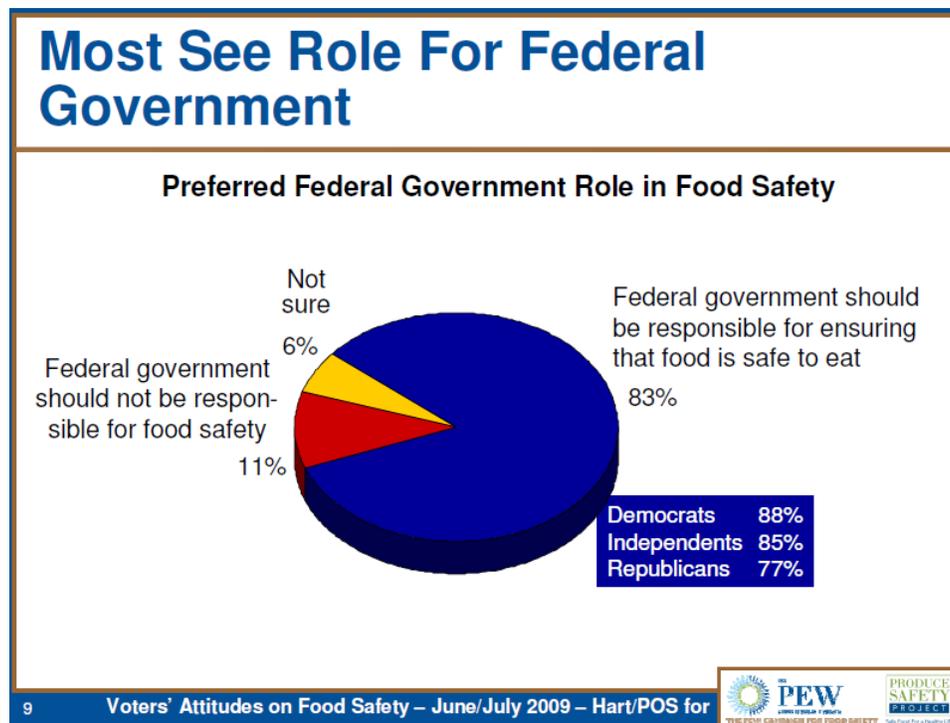
In a surprise to the professional pollsters who questioned voters across the country, the American public appears to overwhelmingly support passing tough new federal food safety legislation.

Hart Research Associates Vice President Jay Campbell announced the poll results at Tuesday's National Food Policy Conference held in Washington, DC. Campbell reported that results were consistent regardless of political party, age, gender, or whether those questioned were from rural or urban areas. He said the strong support from Republicans was particularly surprising given both current partisan attitudes and Republicans' traditional distaste for expanding the role of the federal government.

Among the poll's findings:

- 89% of voters support the federal government putting a battery of new safety measures into place, including 61% who strongly support this. Support crosses gender, age, economic, and even partisan lines – 96% of Democrats, 88% of independents, and 83% of Republicans support such legislation.
- Support for individual measures that could be included in this legislation is similarly very high, with nine in 10 voters or more in favor of:
 - Requiring tracing systems to enable the federal Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to trace food back to its source (94%)
 - Requiring the FDA to inspect food facilities every six to 12 months (91%)
 - Requiring food companies to test for contamination and report results to the government (92%)
 - Requiring produce growers meet standards for water quality, manure use, and worker sanitation (90%)
 - Giving the FDA authority to issue mandatory food recalls (89%)
 - Requiring foreign countries that export to the U.S. to certify that their food safety systems are as strong as ours (92%)

Support for requiring food companies to pay an annual fee of \$1,000 per facility to help fund FDA food safety activity is somewhat lower, but still high at 66%.



Voters are, in fact, so supportive of these measures that fully 72% say it would be worth it to pay between 3% and 5% more in grocery costs to implement new food safety measures. This is true among lower-income (77% worth it), middle-income (74%), and higher-income voters (69%). Campbell explained that the 3-5% range is a worst case scenario, with the true cost more likely to be 1% or less.

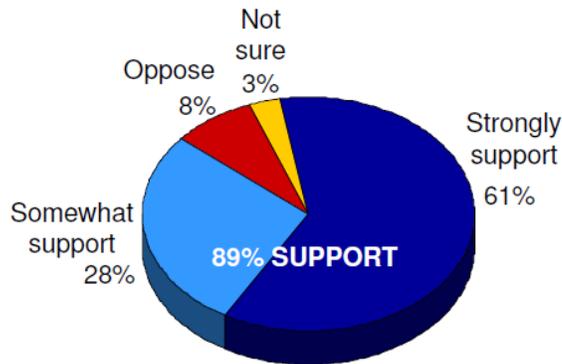
Another sign of how universal support is for tough food safety legislation is that the poll results show 87% support among urban residents, 92% support among suburban residents, and 89% support among small town/rural residents.

The poll findings came from a nationwide survey of 1,005 registered voters, conducted June 29 through July 3, 2009, by Hart Research Associates, a Democratic firm, and Public Opinion Strategies, a Republican firm, on behalf of the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Produce Safety Project.

A similar poll of 511 registered Iowa voters by Hart Research and Public Opinion Strategies carried out August 10-12, 2009 showed virtually identical results, with 90% percent of voting Iowans in favor of giving the federal government additional authority to ensure the food they eat does not make them sick.

Wide Support For New Safety Measures

Support for Federal Gov't Enacting Several Food Safety Measures

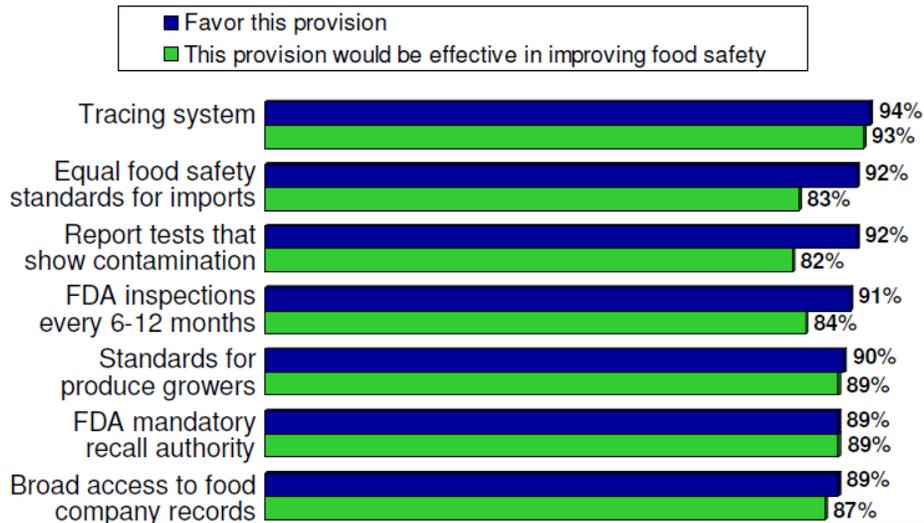


11

Voters' Attitudes on Food Safety – June/July 2009 – Hart/POS for



Strong Support For Most Components



12

Voters' Attitudes on Food Safety – June/July 2009 – Hart/POS for



Survey results for both the national poll and the Iowa poll are available at: www.MakeOurFoodSafe.org