

## Susceptible Populations and Food Safety Workshop

Food and water safety risk assessors and risk managers are frequently confronted with issues related to the fact that some members of the population are more susceptible than others when exposed to a hazard. This increased susceptibility may be seen as increased sensitivity to low doses of a hazard, susceptibility to hazards that do not normally cause harm, or as a more severe response to a hazard. Understanding why these differences exist, and quantifying them, is often critical in accurately characterizing risk for specific populations, as well as in developing effective risk mitigation and risk communication strategies.

Despite the importance of differential susceptibility as a public health issue, it is often difficult to define, measure, or model susceptible populations. Therefore, the goals of this workshop are to:

- Develop a common concept of susceptibility that can be used by risk assessors and risk managers
- Describe currently available data that can be used to define susceptible populations for different hazards
- Identify data and tools that can be used to characterize the relative susceptibilities of these populations
- Describe data sources that can be used to characterize these populations
- Identify procedures for considering multiple types of susceptibility in risk assessments
- Prioritize research needs.

The workshop will look at these issues for both chemical and microbial hazards in food and water to improve our understanding of how consideration of susceptible populations differs for different types of hazards and of how to develop common tools and approaches.

The workshop is scheduled to be held January 20-21, 2010 at the Greenbelt Marriott  
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