RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on insights from the conference and experiences at the National Food Safety and Toxicology Center at Michigan State University. It is our intention at this point to offer recommendations that will challenge all risk communicators.

1. Establish an avenue for open communication between the risk assessor and the risk manager.

2. Set regularly scheduled meetings in which groups opposing your position can voice their concerns.

3. Call a local reporter at least twice a month to discuss the latest events taking place within your organization and invite reporters to those events.

4. Ask a local activist to be part of your decision-making process. This may be a non-paid voting position, but one through which concerns can be expressed.

5. Develop a communication network that involves health and regulator officials, business representatives, university scientists, activists and reporters. Give adequate resources to support the network and use it frequently, even during times of relative calm.

6. Seek critical commentary from within your organization. Prepare press releases that emphasize both the positives and negatives of your activities.

7. Develop communication strategies that will help consumers understand their food choices. Seek ways to make the process of providing food to consumers more transparent.