



## One Up and One Back – FSMA’s Round Trip Ticket Through the Supply Chain

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Roughly one in six Americans (or 48 million people) are [estimated by the CDC](#) to get sick from foodborne diseases each year. When someone reports a foodborne illness, the immediate response is to figure out where the contamination occurred and issue a recall. However, as the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is coming into play, the focus in the food industry will go from responding to contamination to preventing it. FSMA is also increasing the need to track what happens to food across the entire supply chain.

Tracking your food across the total supply chain ensures that manufacturers and distributors take a “one up and one back” approach. This approach enables everyone to know where it came from (one back) and who it was sold to (one up). Confirming the integrity and safety of your food is not just an issue of what happens inside the manufacturing walls anymore. It’s all about being able to promptly respond to a recall during the unfortunate event of a food safety issue, mock recall or demonstrate compliance.

**One Back to the Supplier and One Up to the Distributor**

Many producers, manufacturers and retailers have product tracing systems already in place. However, they vary on the amount of information the system records and how far forward or backward in the supply chain the system tracks.

One part of the FSMA focuses on tracking back to the supplier. For example, if you are a tomato sauce producer, it is likely that you do not get your tomatoes directly from the farm. You probably buy them upstream from a tomato supplier and process it into the tomato sauce that is sold in stores. While it is important to know which supplier your tomatoes came from, FSMA focuses on the immediate supply chain – one up and one back. If tomatoes come into your sauce factory contaminated, they will need to be traced back through each system to find the source of the contamination.

The other part of the FSMA focuses one up to the next step, either distribution or customer. It is necessary to trace who you're selling the product to, where it's going and how it got there. Traceability plays a tremendous role in this and as the importance of track and trace moves downstream into the food supply chain, manufacturers and distributors will benefit by using traceability solutions to meet FSMA standards and compliance and understand where their product is going. There are other benefits as well. With traceability, labor in the supply chain is more efficient and easy to track and trace. Food is being moved more rapidly through the supply chain and with less risk of spoilage or contamination.

### **Tracking your way through the supply chain round trip**

While the FDA does not require companies across the supply chain to use electronic traceability solutions, many are recognizing that keep records electronically is the only way to comply with the FSMA. When it comes to tracking up and back through the supply chain, electronic traceability gives manufacturers the capacity to view information at both a high level and a more drilled-down version.

Having access to these different views empowers everyone within your organization to gain a better understanding and track the supply chain process round trip – from receipt of raw materials to shipment to customers and back again. In the end, no matter which part of the supply chain your organization falls in, ensuring the safety of your consumers puts your company's reputation on the line all the time. FSMA sanctions manufacturers to take a proactive stance and commit the necessary time and resources toward compliance planning for prevention and supply chain traceability implementation.