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Abstract submitted by Kevin Atchason to the Iowa Environmental Health Association

Climate Crisis and Food Safety; a Summary of Findings of the European Food Safety Study Authority

The Climate Crisis has an impact on the occurrence of food safety hazards at various stages of the food chain. There are multiple pathways through which climate related factors may impact food safety.

Attempting to anticipate potential long- term effects of the Climate Crisis on food safety, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recently completed the “Climate change and emerging risks for food safety” (CLEFSA, 2020). CLEFSA identified several issues that indicate that the Climate Crisis has the potential of causing, enhancing or modifying the occurrence and intensity of some food-borne diseases.

This presentation will summarize those findings. Topics covered will include:

Impact of increased temperatures and extreme events on food pathogen multiplication

Impact of snow freeze–melt process on bacterial populations

Challenges to the integrity of the refrigeration chain

Risk of exposure to zombie pathogens (viruses) in the thawing permafrost

Impacts on livestock production

Emergence of viruses and bacteria

Harmful algal blooms (HABs)

Impact of climate change on crop quality

Introduction of novel food allergens and increasing cases of food allergies

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