**Todd J. Ward** is a supervisory research geneticist with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, and is the research leader for the Bacterial Foodborne Pathogens and Mycology Research Unit at the National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research. Ward conducts research on population genetics, genomics and molecular epidemiology of food borne bacterial pathogens and mycotoxigenic fungi. In addition, Ward oversees a group of 18 scientists and 22 support staff conducting research in genetics, microbiology, chemistry and plant biology in order to develop information and molecular tools needed to enhance food safety and crop production in the U.S. and around the world. Ward received a bachelor of sciences degree in biology from the University of Cincinnati in 1995, and received a Ph.D. in genetics from Texas A&M University in 2000.