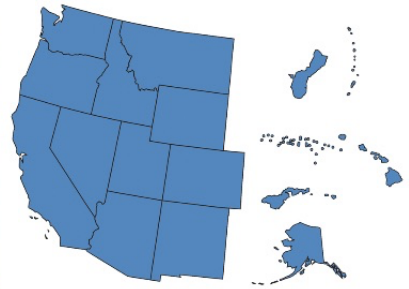


[View this email in your browser](#)

# WRRC



## Western Regional Center to Enhance Food Safety

February 2021 Newsletter

Dear WRCEFS Community,

Below you will find information related to WRCEFS events, relevant resources, funding and job opportunities, and updates from our national partners and alliances.

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## **Add-on Peer Review Process**

The Western Regional Center to Enhance Food Safety in collaboration with the Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety (NECAFS) has been working on a peer review process for add-on content that will be facilitated through the Clearinghouse.

Add-ons are material(s) in addition to standardized curricula that are developed and delivered pre-course, during a course, or post-course as a standalone.

We are excited to be opening up this review system in **early March**. Please be on the lookout for an additional newsletter that will provide detailed instructions and guidance on the peer review process.

***At this time we are soliciting Western Region reviewers.***

**Please complete this survey by March 26th to be added to our subject matter expert list:**

[https://oregonstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cC51GrGczbC6bpY](https://oregonstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cC51GrGczbC6bpY)

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## **5th WRCEFS Annual Meeting- Save the Date!**

Planning has begun for the 2021 WRCEFS Virtual Annual Meeting. The annual meeting is planned for May 4-6th, 2021. These three hour sessions will be held from 1-4 PM PDT on May 4th and 6th as well as from 9-12 AM PDT on May 5th.

*Stay tuned to future emails and newsletters for registration information and meeting agenda.*

Photo credit: Faith Critzer, WSU, 2021

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## Funding Opportunities

USDA NIFA has recently released several funding opportunities in food and agricultural sciences, including the call for Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP) proposals. To learn more about this program and apply for the grant, please click [here](#). The due date for FSOP proposals is **April 1, 2021**.

A communication plan, evaluation of outcomes, and reporting of these activities to Region Centers (Western Regional Center) is required and must be written into proposals. If you are planning to apply, please reach out to Jovana at [wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu) with your communication plan so that a letter of support can be provided.

Photo credit: Pixabay, Nattanan Kanchanaprat, 2017





## New WRCEFS Resource

The Western Regional Center has created a resource page on food safety during power outages. This is located under our new crisis resources page. To view the power outage resource page, please use this link: <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/wrcefs/article/food-safety-during-power-outages>

Photo Credit: Pixabay, Pexels, 2016

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## New Podcast Alert!

Tilth Alliance and WSU Food Systems have collaborated to bring their annual farm walks as a virtual listening experience. With the mission of education for farmers, by farmers, this podcast provides new, beginning, and existing farmers with education, advice, and mentorship from experienced farmers, agricultural and food systems professionals, and WSU Extension Specialists. To join in on the weekly walks, check out the farm walks

website <https://www.farmwalks.org/>.

Photo credit: Riled Up Goats, 2021



## Training and Resource Updates

1) The PSA team has modified their policy on remote delivery for PSA courses during the Coronavirus outbreak. Below are resources and documents needed to successfully deliver PSA content during this time.

- [Temporary\\_policy](#)
- [Electronic Course Registration Form](#)
- [PSA Remote Delivery FAQ](#)
- PSA Educators' Call about remote delivery in [English](#) and slides in [Spanish](#)
- [Zoom Webinar Etiquette and Practices page](#)

2) Remote grower trainings are being offered throughout the Western region. To see a complete listing, please visit the PSA or WRCEFS websites.

3) The online PSA grower training course is open. This three-week course can be completed at-your-own-pace and is expected to take 15-30 hours total for successful completion. To learn more about costs and key differences in the online course compared to the in-person/remote delivery courses or register for an upcoming course, please visit the PSA website.

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## FDA Updates

### 1) FDA Shares Resources for the Food and Agriculture Sector about COVID-19 Vaccination

The FDA published a new web page, [COVID-19 Vaccination & the Food and Agriculture Sector](#), to share information and resources to help employers in the Food and Agriculture sector communicate about COVID-19 vaccination to their workforce.

The page includes links to information about:

- The safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines authorized for emergency use by the FDA and fact sheets in more than 25 languages
- A CDC tool kit in different languages with key messages to reach essential workers about COVID-19 vaccination
- Information about the availability of vaccines in your community

As the COVID-19 vaccine supply increases, the FDA hopes these resources will help leadership and management of food and agriculture operations support worker vaccination.

## **2) FDA Announces New Sampling Plan for Romaine Grown in the Yuma, Arizona Growing Region**

On February 5th, the FDA launched an assignment to collect romaine lettuce samples from commercial coolers in the Yuma County, Arizona growing region during the current harvest season. The samples will be tested for Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and *Salmonella* spp. as part of ongoing surveillance efforts following the spring 2018 multistate *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak of foodborne illness linked to romaine lettuce from the Yuma agricultural region. *Salmonella* spp. also commonly causes foodborne illness outbreaks in the United States which have at times been linked to romaine lettuce consumption.

The FDA plans to begin collecting samples of romaine lettuce from commercial coolers in February and intends to continue sampling through the end of the romaine harvest season in Yuma. The FDA assignment will focus on commercial cooler and cold storage facilities where field heat is removed from harvested romaine and where product is cold stored before processing and shipment. The focus on these sites enables the FDA to efficiently collect samples from multiple farms at centralized locations, following a similar model used during an assignment conducted in FY19.

To learn more about the sampling plan, please click [here](#).

## **3) FDA Publishes Materials from Food Traceability Public Meetings, including Supply Chain Example**

The FDA recently held a series of [three virtual public meetings](#) in 2020 to discuss the recently released Food Traceability Proposed Rule. The purpose of the public meetings was to discuss the proposed rule, and to support the



public's evaluation and commenting process on the proposed rule. Following each of the public meetings the FDA posted a video recording and transcript on our public meeting webpage. The FDA is now publishing the remaining materials discussed at the meetings, the six slide presentations.

The supply chain example discussed during the public meetings was of a salad kit prepared with cherry tomatoes, iceberg lettuce, and other foods, focused on the tomato grower, salad kit maker, distributor, and retail store. At the public meetings, FDA explained that this is only one example and it does NOT represent the only way data could be kept and shared under the proposed requirements.

FDA will carefully consider comments submitted to the public docket when drafting the final rule, which may differ from the proposed rule. The comment period was extended until February 22, 2021.



## **WRCEFS FSPCA and PSA Training Information**

WRCEFS is interested in having anyone who delivers PSA or FSPCA courses remotely to share their experiences with the rest of the group so we can learn from their activities. If you plan on offering remote courses and would be willing to share your experiences, please email Jovana Kovacevic at [wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu).

We understand collecting pre-/post-test data during remote training is challenging. A fillable version of these tests are now available. If interested, please email Stephanie Brown at [wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu) to obtain a copy. There are also polling options available in Zoom for capturing this information. If you have any specific questions on Zoom polling options, please contact us at [wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu).

**If you are capturing these data, please share with WRCEFS.**

For any remote courses, please continue to share all cover sheets and attendance rosters with WRCEFS. On the cover sheet, please indicate that the training was delivered remotely.

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## Survey Request

Researchers from Virginia Tech and North Carolina State University are requesting our help. Their team is assessing the impact of COVID-19 on farmers markets nationwide. They are seeking input from farmers market vendors on practices implemented in response to COVID-19. They hope to use this data to better understand how resources can be developed for these groups.

The survey can be accessed through the following link: [https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_byeRemthrdWqbu5](https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_byeRemthrdWqbu5)

Please share this survey within your networks. If you have any questions about the survey or the research it supports, please contact either Minh Duong at [minhd16@vt.edu](mailto:minhd16@vt.edu) or Ben Chapman at [bjchapma@ncsu.edu](mailto:bjchapma@ncsu.edu)

# Job Opportunity

## 1) Produce Safety Program Manager- Washington State Department of Agriculture

*The Washington State Department of Agriculture's Produce Safety Program is excited to announce the opening of the Produce Safety Program Manager position in Olympia Washington!*

**ABOUT THE POSITION:** The **Produce Safety Program Manager** is primarily responsible for implementing and operationalizing the federal Produce Safety Rule - part of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) - in Washington State. The FSMA Produce Safety Rule requires certain produce production and handling activities (for produce eaten raw) to be conducted in a sanitary manner. This position is expected to continuously improve the state's Produce Safety Program, which exists to protect public health through implementation of the federal Produce Safety Rule. This position is funded on a five-year basis by a federal cooperative agreement. The program helps farmers understand and successfully meet the requirements of the rule, conducts on-farm inspections, and ultimately protects public health.

*For more information about this position, follow this [link](#) or find the position by searching Produce Safety Program Manager-WMS02 at: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/washington>*

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## Faces of WRCEFS

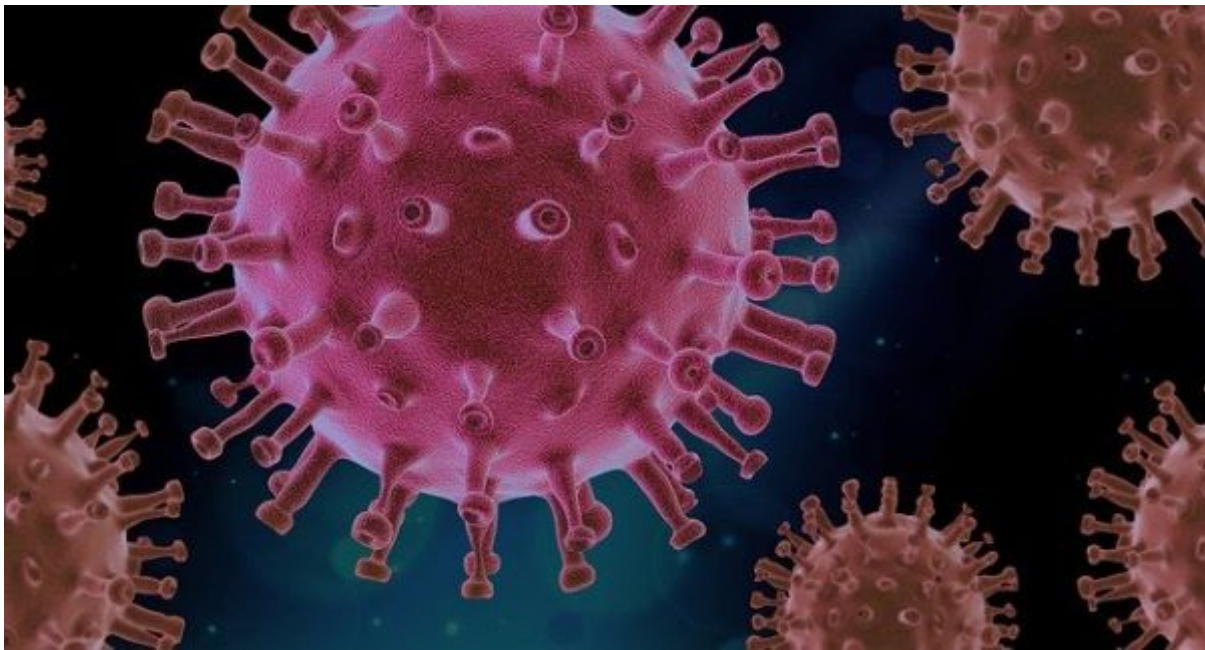
We have added a new section to

## Members



**FACES OF WRCEFS**

the website called the Faces of WRCEFS. Here you can find staff spotlights, featuring our leadership team and partners. The goal of Faces of WRCEFS is to highlight the diverse expertise of our regional leaders by showcasing their stories and work related to the Food Safety Modernization Act.



## COVID-19 Resources

1) The OSU team has created a page on the WRCEFS website dedicated to COVID-19 and food safety resources. We currently have many fact sheets, social media images, and links to other federal and state-specific



websites and resources for viewing.

If you have made any fact sheets, documents, or websites related to food safety and COVID-19 and want these shared within the Western region, please email us at [wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu).

2) North Carolina State University, Rutgers University, the University of Florida, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln have partnered to develop FoodCoVNET. This team will be evaluating current practices through laboratory research on virus persistence, inactivation and transfer. Results collected from this team will be provided on their [website](#), which will serve as a hub information related to SARS-CoV-2 management in the food sector. For more information about the team and to view current resources, please check out their website (<https://foodcovnet.ces.ncsu.edu/welcome-to-foodcovnet/>).

**New:** The FoodCoVNET team is hosting a series of webinars on food industry issues related to COVID-19. Their first webinar was about Vaccine Uptake and Hesitancy, and the recording can be watched on their website. There is a second webinar scheduled on March 4th from 12-1 PM (EST) on Airflow, Ventilation, and Close Contact.

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## WRCEFS Communication

### Website

Website content is constantly being added so please continue to check back with us to find new resources, training opportunities, and more!

### Social Media

Follow us on Social Media! We have WRCEFS accounts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)! We will be posting updates, regional spotlights, and upcoming training opportunities on a weekly basis. We will also be sharing this information on the WRCEFS

website. If you have anything that should be shared with the WRCEFS community, please contact Stephanie Brown ([wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu)).

## Stay safe!



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**Our mailing address is:**

[wrcefs@oregonstate.edu](mailto:wrcefs@oregonstate.edu)

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