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WRRC



Western Regional Center to Enhance Food Safety

June 2023 Newsletter

Dear WRCEFS Community,

Below you will find information related to the WRCEFS annual meeting, an important PSA training update, a new resource, a peer review process update, national updates and educational events, and ongoing WRCEFS initiatives.



WRCEFS Annual Meeting

WRCEFS hosted its 7th Annual Meeting in Prosser, Washington on May 3-4, 2023, with a pre-meeting workshop held on May 2, 2023. During the two day Annual Meeting, 57 attendees heard updates from WRCEFS members and FSOP grant awardees in the Western Region, USDA, FDA, PSA, FSPCA, IFAI, NFU, sister Regional Centers and the Lead Regional Coordination Center. On day one, updates on the peer review process for add-ons and evaluations were also shared. During both days, the group learned about several topics of interest including produce safety and the food traceability rule, food safety and onion research, Washington tree fruit industry research highlights and current challenges, and FDA inspectional observations.

Prior to the Annual Meeting, a pre-meeting professional development workshop was held on May 2, 2023. The 17 workshop attendees started off the day with a tour of a local onion packinghouse and transitioned into post harvest agricultural water lab activities in the afternoon.

Image credit: Cathy Blood, 2023

A Guide to Food Safety Certification for Food Hubs and Food Facilities



Center for Precision Medicine
and Data Sciences



New Food Hub Resource

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) in collaboration with partners at the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

and the University of California at Davis Center for Precision Medicine and Data Science have created a guide to food safety certification for food hubs and food facilities. The purpose of this guide is to help food hubs and facilities navigate food safety questions from buyers and pursue third-party food safety audit(s).

[Go to Food Safety Certification Guide](#)



Upcoming IAFP Webinar

The Regional Centers and USDA NIFA will be participating in the upcoming IAFP webinar Work Smarter, Not Harder-discussing the challenges and opportunities to improve support specific to small processors. This webinar will take place on June 5th, 2023 from 12:00 - 1:00PM PT.

Learning objectives for this webinar include:

- A discussion of current best-shared practices and advice in terms of how to connect and engage with small processors, including a collaborative discussion related to some of the limiting factors that we have learned across regional centers through direct engagement with this underserved community.
- Awareness of existing resources developed by each regional center and the USDA Food Safety Outreach Program and discussion of how others can leverage those resources within their work.
- Create connections that can foster future collaborative work resulting in greater impact.

Webinar speakers include: Annie Fitzgerald (NECAFS), Lynette Johnston (Southern Center), Angela Shaw (NCR), Stephanie Brown (WRCEFS), Jodi Williams (USDA NIFA), and Amanda Kinchla (Moderator, NECAFS)

Image credit: Pixels, Andrew Neel, 2019

[Register for the IAFP Webinar here](#)



PSA Updates

NEW- 1) In May 2023, the PSA amended its policy for PSA Grower Training delivery, **allowing remote delivery to become a permanent option**. For more information on remote delivery of courses, please review the [remote grower training delivery policy page](#).

2) On January 9, 2023, the PSA Lead Trainer Application process was reopened. The updated application process has been streamlined to ensure PSA Trainer education and relevant experiences are accurately captured at the time of application submission. Any PSA Trainer who previously received a PSA Lead Trainer Application link but has not yet applied to be a PSA Lead Trainer, their assigned short answer questions have not changed.

PSA Trainers interested in submitting a PSA Lead Trainer Application are encouraged to review the PSA [Lead Trainer Application Process website](#), which includes a PSA Lead Trainer Process [flowchart](#), PSA Lead Trainer Applicant Scoring [document](#), and "Tips for Developing a Successful PSA Lead Trainer Application" [factsheet](#).



The Peer Review Process for Add-on Content

Add-on Peer Review Process Update

The Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse Add-on Peer Review Process is now accepting short course submissions!

More information about this new type of peer review including a brief explanation of what can be reviewed in the FSR Clearinghouse and what changes were made to the peer review process can be found by reading the update newsletter (see button below).

[Clearinghouse Add-on Peer Review Update Newsletter](#)

Image Credit: CAFF, 2023



Survey Opportunities

Please share these survey opportunities with your networks!

1) Small-scale fruit and vegetable grower survey

Researchers at the UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences are interested in learning about small-scale agricultural producers' perception and their engagement in on-farm food safety practices. Your responses are valuable as they will help guide future educational interventions and policies related to on-farm food safety. The UF researchers are asking agricultural producers to participate in a survey which should take no more than 10 minutes and would be greatly appreciated. Please click the button below to participate in the study.

[Go to Small Scale Fruit and Vegetable Grower Survey](https://us4.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/preview-content-html?id=16863548)

2) Indoor Produce Grower Survey

The produce safety teams from Auburn University, Alabama A&M University, and the University of Georgia would like to invite you to participate in this survey to collect information about knowledge gaps in food safety practices among indoor produce growers.

Who should participate? You may participate if you are an adult over 18 years of age and are a produce grower, harvester, packer, seller, food safety personnel, or otherwise involved in the production of fresh produce using indoor agriculture methods, including hydroponics and aquaponics.

Participants will be asked to complete an online Qualtrics survey, which will take around 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the farmer's food safety practices.

This survey is voluntary and anonymous. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in the survey. There are no costs to complete the survey. Your participation will be used to improve the quality of food safety training and outreach programs for indoor, soilless growing. Additionally, if you choose, you may provide contact information to be entered into a raffle for a **\$100 prepaid debit card** as compensation for completing the survey. Ten participants will be randomly selected to win after the survey is closed. If you do not wish to enter the raffle or provide contact information, you may still complete the survey without doing so.

Why should you participate? The purpose of this survey is to improve the quality of food safety educational programs and to develop a targeted food safety educational curriculum for indoor produce growers.

[Go to Indoor Produce Grower Survey](#)

3) Agricultural Water Survey

Do you irrigate produce? Have questions about subpart E or agricultural water? The CONTACT team is launching an industry survey on pre harvest water use as part of a successful food safety program. Help CONTACT learn about your operation and how you use production water on the farm. Please participate by following the link in the button below.

[Go to Agricultural Water Survey](#)

Image credit: Pixels, Sora Shimazaki, 2020

IFPA Membership Opportunity

The International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA) is offering complimentary membership to **individual academic researchers and university extension**. With an IFPA membership, you can access their data, directory, and analytics and access discounted registration for events and programs and all content that is currently behind their pay wall.

To get complimentary membership, please fill out their form using the button below.

[IFPA membership form](#)



Artisan Dairy Food Safety Plan Online Coaching Workshop and Office Hours

Online Course

The online, self-paced Artisan Dairy Food Safety Plan Coaching Workshop is intended for small to mid-sized dairy food producers who are preparing to create, or are already developing, a FSMA compliant, preventive control-based, food safety plan. The goal of this program is to combine food safety plan educational material with real-time connections to dairy food safety coaches for artisan dairy producers wherever they may be in the country. PCQI lead trainers review key food safety plan topics in each self-paced module. There are NO prerequisites. PCQI certification is recommended but not required prior to enrollment.

Who Should Attend: Small to mid-sized cheese, ice cream, and other dairy food producers just starting off, those taking the next step in their food safety plan development, and those looking for a review of their

current plans. **These workshops are NOT intended to provide PCQI certification.**

Register for workshop here: <https://cals.cornell.edu/dfe-artisan-dairy-food-safety-plan-coaching-virtual>.

Office Hours

Each month, there are two "office hour" Q&A sessions which provide participants with the opportunity to ask questions about a designated food safety topic or about their own specific food safety plan questions with food safety experts.

All office hours are free to attend. You can find the schedule and sign up for office hours here:

<https://www.dairyfoodsafetycoalition.com/office-hours-schedule/>

This work is supported by the Food Safety Outreach Program Grant No. 2021-70020-35489 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

WRCEFS Ongoing Initiatives

- **Food Safety Training Data-** WRCEFS is collecting information about PSA, FSPCA, and other food safety trainings in our region.
To share data and get quarterly training reports for your state/region, please contact us at wrcefs.data@oregonstate.edu.
- **Report Your Food Safety Training Courses-** For FSOP grantees and others who send us training data, you can now use a Digital Cover Page via [this Qualtrics link](#) or complete the

traditional cover page document and email to

wrcefs.data@oregonstate.edu.

- **WRCEFS Website-**

- FDA updates page- more links to FDA resources and new updates now available [here](#).

- Faces of WRCEFS is being updated.

Let us know if you would like to be featured by emailing

wrcefs@oregonstate.edu.

- **WRCEFS Communication (social media)-** Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)! We post updates, resources, regional spotlights, and upcoming training opportunities on a regular basis. If you have anything that should be shared with the WRCEFS community, please send to wrcefs@oregonstate.edu.

Stay safe!



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wrcefs@oregonstate.edu

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