Common Knowledge Gaps Identified in PSA Lead Trainer Applications

Produce Safety Educator’s Call #32
June 25, 2018

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The Produce Safety Alliance Team
Instructions

• All participants are muted.
• There will be time for questions and answers throughout the meeting.
  – We may not get around to all comments/questions, BUT you may leave additional comments in the comment box to be compiled after the session.
• This session will be recorded and notes will be shared via the listserv and on our website after the call.
Topics for Today

• Review of the PSA Lead Trainer Process
• Common Challenges with Trainer Applications and Supplemental Applications
• Improving on Knowledge and Experience Gaps
• Staying Informed on Updates to the Produce Safety Rule
Review of the PSA Lead Trainer Process
**Review: PSA Lead Trainer Process**

### PSA Trainer Flow Diagram

1. Prospective trainer completes and submits PSA Trainer Application to attend a PSA Train-the-Trainer Course.

2. Individual attends the entire two-day PSA Train-the-Trainer Course. Trainer receives a certificate indicating they are a PSA Trainer.

3A. **PSA TRAINER**
   - PSA Trainers may:
     - Deliver any of the seven curriculum modules under the supervision of a PSA Lead Trainer
     - Register PSA Grower Training Courses with AFDO, as long as a PSA Lead Trainer will be physically present for the entire course
     - May proceed with the PSA Lead Trainer application process (See 3B)

3B. **PSA LEAD TRAINER**
   - Trainer fills out Supplemental Application, including four short answer questions
   - The PSA Trainer Application and Supplemental Application are reviewed and evaluated by the PSA Lead Trainer Review Committee using a standardized rubric designed to assess the applicant in the four competency areas
   - PSA Lead Trainer Review Committee will decide if trainer is qualified to become a PSA Lead Trainer through use of the rubric
PSA Lead Trainers will be evaluated on two components:

1. PSA Trainer Application
   • Educational Background
   • Training and Teaching Experience
   • Produce Production and Handling Experience

2. Supplemental application
   • Four short answer questions
   • Based on grower training questions
Review: PSA Lead Trainer Evaluation Process

• Designed to ensure that PSA Lead Trainer meet four key competency areas:
  1. Produce Safety Scientific Knowledge
  2. Educational Training Delivery
  3. Fruit and Vegetable Production Knowledge
  4. FSMA Produce Safety Rule

• Satisfying all these diverse competency areas may be a challenge for some people
Why do we rely on PSA Lead Trainers?

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Why do we rely on PSA Lead Trainers?

PSA Lead Trainers:
• Have mastered all competency areas
• Ensure all other trainers are providing correct information
• Rectify misinformation
• Organize logistical parts of the standardized training (evaluations, staying on the agenda)
PSA Lead Trainer Application Statistics

351 Lead Trainer Applications have been submitted (June 2018)

• 200 Lead Trainer Applications have been approved
• 119 Lead Trainer Applications have been declined
• 16 Applications are currently under review
• 6 Applications have been unassigned, 9 unpaid

The following slides will address the primary issues that reviewers find with Lead Trainer Applications
Common Trainer
Application Deficiencies
Trainer Application Deficiencies

- Lack of relevant training experience
- Lack of on-farm or produce experience
- Lack of relevant educational background
Trainer Application Deficiencies: Relevant Training Experience

• Training experience may include a variety of courses and experience
  – Teaching courses: GAPs, FSPCA Qualified Individual training
  – One-on-one assistance: Helping growers prepare for an audit or inspection
• Accounts for years of experience
• Demonstrates ability to teach adult learners
Relevant Training Experience: Gaining Additional Practice

• Prioritize teaching relevant material
  – Presentations on FSMA and produce safety
  – GAPs courses
  – One-on-one trainings

• Co-teach at a PSA Grower Training with a Lead Trainer
  – Allows you to become acquainted with the PSR
  – How to apply Rule requirements to unique farm scenarios
  – View challenges from the growers point of view

How can I find a PSA Lead Trainer to co-train with?
Relevant Teaching Experience: Finding a Co-Trainer

- Contact the PSA Team for mentoring opportunities
- Find a PSA Trainer/Lead Trainer in your region with the public trainer directory
Adding New Experience to your Trainer Application

Examples include:
• On Farm Readiness Review
• Inspector’s training
• Teaching PSA GT
• Helping grower with a food safety plan
Trainer Application Deficiencies: Produce and On-Farm Experience

• Production experience can include:
  – Working on a produce farm or packinghouse
  – Experience in produce retail handling
  – Providing outreach to growers

• Relate to grower challenges
  – Your buyer makes you do what?!

• Enrich grower training delivery with examples
Produce and On-Farm Experience: Gaining Additional Experience

• Suggestions for gaining on-farm experience:
  – Volunteer to help on a farm
  – Working CSA share (exchange volunteer hours for produce)
  – Attend university extension on-farm workshops and tours
  – Offer to assist with writing a food safety plan
  – Assist with On Farm Readiness Reviews
Produce and On-Farm Experience: Gaining Additional Experience

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• Ask questions to gain understanding of farm practices
  – Why would you do that practice?
  – How does it work?
Trainer Application Deficiencies: Relevant Educational Background

- Educational background can include:
  - ServSafe, Pesticide applicator, HACCP
  - Degree in relevant competency area
  - Other educational experiences

- Produce safety educators come from a wide variety of backgrounds
Supplemental Application Tips & Trainer Challenges
Supplemental Application

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Supplemental Application:
• Four randomly-selected short answer questions
• 350 words maximum per question
• Representative of commonly-asked questions during grower trainings
Tips for filling out the Supplemental Application

• Open the application, save the questions, and work on them in Word
• Submit after reviewing the responses
Tips for filling out the Supplemental Application

• Do not plagiarize!
• Go beyond what the PSA Grower manual addresses
• Challenges with Produce Safety Scientific Knowledge section
  – Understanding the differences between different types of microorganisms
  – How does it connect to the produce safety and farm practices?
• Answer questions like you would answer a farmer’s questions
Supplemental Application Challenges

- Q4: Knowledge of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule
- Q2: Fruit and Vegetable Production Knowledge
- Q1: Produce Safety Scientific Knowledge
- Q3: Effective Training Delivery

Common deficiencies seen in applications influenced the development of this presentation.
Supplemental Application Challenges

Q1: Produce Safety Knowledge
Q2: Fruit and Vegetable Production
Q3: Effective Training Delivery
Q4: Produce Safety Rule
Observations on Supplemental Application Deficiencies

• Scenario-based questions are the most challenging
  – Widely-asked during grower trainings
  – Not always a simple answer
Observations on Supplemental Application Deficiencies

• Scenario-based questions are the most challenging
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▪ Be prepared to expand on the response
  – Why grower should use a 25 foot buffer zone?
  – How would you recommend turning the compost pile?
Supplemental Application Challenges: Knowledge of FSMA PSR

• Lack of familiarity with Rule requirements
  – “Agricultural water”
  – “Treated vs. untreated soil amendments”
  – “Total food sales”

• Important to remain informed on recent Rule updates
  – More on this later in the presentation
Supplemental Application Challenges: Knowledge of FSMA PSR

• Challenge distinguishing between FSMA PSR requirements and GAPs:
  “Using a certified lab is a PSR requirement”
  “Subpart F requires that farms sample compost for pathogens”
  “Produce cannot come in contact with wooden bins”
Supplemental Application Challenges: Knowledge of FSMA PSR

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Incorrect ‘recommendations’ can be costly for the grower
What do you mean, this new packinghouse ‘wasn’t a PSR requirement?!’
Supplemental Application Challenges: Fruit and Vegetable Production

• Viewing farm as a processing facility

  “Do not harvest produce if animals have entered the field”

VS.

Produce Safety Alliance
Supplemental Application Challenges: Fruit and Vegetable Production

• Viewing farm as a processing facility
  “Do not harvest produce if animals have entered the field”

• Providing impractical methods to reduce risk
  “Do not use surface water for produce”
  “Composting is the only way to reduce risk from soil amendments”
Staying Informed on Rule Updates
Credible Information Sources

- Reliable information resources may include:
  - PSR Preamble
  - FDA Guidance
  - FDA Technical Assistance Network
  - FDA Produce Safety Network staff
  - FSMA Regional Centers
  - Produce Safety Alliance, Local Foods Collaborative, and Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative
  - The regulatory authority under the FDA Cooperative Agreement Program in your state, if any
**FSMA PSR Preamble: CTRL +F is Your Friend!**

- **TIP:** Easily navigate to relevant comments or places where topic is mentioned within preamble or rule by using ‘CTRL Find’
- Develop a list of repeat grower questions/comment responses

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Preamble includes original comment (may be summarized) and FDA’s response/thinking
NECAFS Clearinghouse
New Addition: TAN Qs

- http://www.uvm.edu/extension/necafs/clearinghouse
Summary

• Improve teaching proficiency by gaining experience in the four competency areas to become a Lead Trainer
• Seize opportunities for co-training and mentoring with regional trainers
• Consider the nuances and impact to production practices when making recommendations to growers
Next Meeting

• **Tentative**: July 31, 2018 at 2PM Eastern
• **Tentative topic**: On Farm Readiness Review
  Speakers: Bob Ehart, NASDA; Michelle Danyluk, Univ. Florida
• Meeting info to be sent out via the listserv closer to the time of the call
• Submit other topics for discussion to Gretchen (glw53@cornell.edu)
The PSA Website
http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/

- Like us on Facebook!
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Join the listserv

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