Produce Safety Educator’s Monthly Call #15  
February 23, 2015  
2 PM EST  
Meeting Summary

Total Attendance: 56  
Meeting recording available at:  
https://cornell.webex.com/cornell/lsr.php?RCID=b13fc38174116eec0505707b2b99830c  
*Note: WebEx did not record the first 5 minutes of this meeting due to server errors, please review notes for information of discussion at beginning of the meeting.

Agenda

- Produce Safety Alliance Update  
  - Milestones and curriculum development process  
  - PSA Train-the-Trainer Pilot  
  - PSA Trainer Competencies and Certification Process (still in the works)  
  - PSA Grower Training Pilot  
- Additional items  
  - Grower survey opportunity  
  - Update on EIS comment period

Discussion

I. Produce Safety Alliance Milestones and Curriculum Development Process  
A brief review of how we arrived at the current curriculum content.

A. 2010: The PSA was formed in 2010. One priority was the development of the curriculum.

B. 2011: GAPs Education & Training Materials Conference - Orlando, FL  
Attended by 125 people from 28 states to discuss the PSA’s goals and review outreach materials from 40 programs nationwide that have been developed to assist fruit and vegetable growers with understanding and implementing GAPs on farms and in packinghouses. It was a priority to build the curriculum from already available resources when possible. Conference proceedings are available at:  

C. 2011-2012: Working Committee Process  
Ten working committees, including a total of 178 participants, discussed the challenges of implementing GAPs on farms to identify critical content areas for the curriculum. In total, the PSA hosted 72 WC meetings to guide the development of curriculum content. All meeting notes and summary documents are catalogued at:  
http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/working.html
D. 2012: Farmer Focus Groups
   Eight focus groups with participation from 89 produce growers were conducted around
   the country (FL, CA, NY, OH) to understand growers’ needs and expectations from
   produce safety training. A summary of the farmer focus groups is available at:
   http://producetasafetyalliance.cornell.edu/newsletters/FocusGroupSummary.pdf

E. 2013: Trainer Competency and Train the Trainer Discussion at Center for Produce Safety
   Annual Meeting - Rochester, NY
   Twenty-seven individuals from academia, industry, and government met prior to discuss
   qualifications of trainers and logistics of trainer certification.

F. 2012-2014: Curriculum and Training Program Development
   Based on WC and focus group input, learning objectives were established to build a one-
   day produce safety training program with seven hours of dedicated instruction time for
   fruit and vegetable growers. The curriculum is now complete including seven modules
   and associated resources for a Grower Training Program. A Train-the-Trainer Program
   has been developed in conjunction to ensure a qualified cadre of instructors is available.

II. PSA Pilot Training Updates
A. Pilot Train-the-Trainer: December 17 & 18, 2014 in Geneva, NY
   • Attended by 38 individuals from academia, government, and the produce industry
     including produce growers
   • States Participating: NY (9), CA (5), OH (3), FL (2), MT (2), NC (2), MI, NE, WA, NJ,
     MS, NH, CO, NM, Canada
   • NRCS (1), AFDO (1), USDA (2), FDA (2)
   • Day 1: In depth review of modules and discussion about content...this continued
     into Day 2
   • Day 2: Presentations from collaborators (USDA, NRCS, FDA), discussion on trainer
     certification
   • Key CURRICULUM Outcomes
     o Concern there was too much content and that it would be difficult to cover
       it all in the allocated time
     o Made slide modifications and made several slides optional
     o Discussed need to make it clear what things in the curriculum are required
       by the regulation and which are guidance
     o Discussion about expectation for pre-requisite knowledge of FSMA for
       trainers before attending TTT
     o Current approach is to have basic/simple content with the intent to
       provide a baseline of knowledge with future plans of continuing ed.
       modules
     o Teaching notes were viewed as sufficient to guide trainers and provide
       adequate background information and additional reading
• **Key DELIVERY Outcomes**
  
  - Discussion of how to develop multi-day training programs to incorporate 
    food safety plan writing (WC recommendations, growers often need plans 
    for audits, long-term NY study)
    - 14 TTT participants said they plan to do multi-day training, 6 NO
    - Most indicated they plan to train as a team: 19 – Team, 5 – Solo, 2 – Other
    - 19 were confident they had qualified people to form teams
    - Will need resources to help growers with water testing, math calculations 
      and postharvest water management
  
  • **Summary of Key TRAIN-THE-TRAINER Outcomes**
  
  - Adult education is an important component to cover in the training, but 
    trainers should have some prior experience
  - MUST have FSMA knowledge coming into training
  - Short presentations from NRCS, USDA, FDA are important, 
    but a list of resources available is even more critical
  - Length of training is good (see first bullet for base knowledge)
  - Trainer application process as proposed is too rigorous
  - Currently revising application, competency areas, and process for 
    certification and formation of training teams
  
  • **Summary of Revisions to Trainer Competencies and Certification**
  
  - Three competency areas original proposed:
    1. Produce Safety Scientific Knowledge
    2. Fruit & Vegetable Production Knowledge
    3. Effective Training Delivery
  - Effective Training Delivery was decided to be incorporated into the other 
    competency areas since it was viewed as not able to standalone.
  - A number of options for trainer certification have been explored, including:
    - Pre-screening trainers prior to allowing them attend training
    - Post-training testing
    - Mentor Process
    - Interview
    - Practicum
  - The interview process was decided as the most practical route to ensure 
    trainer competencies and maintain a level of quality control.
  - There was concern about forming training teams and the trainer interview 
    process being too rigorous for all trainers to participate.
  - Therefore, the current proposed trainer certification process is outlined on 
    the next page to reflect that, at minimum, each training should have at 
    least one individual who is fully certified (attended the 2-day Train-the- 
    Trainer course AND participate in the telephone interview to become 
    certified). That ‘lead’ trainer can then form training teams, with others that
have, at minimum, attended the 2-day Train-the-Trainer course. These individuals, if they are training under a ‘lead’/certified trainer do not need to participate in the phone interview for certification.

- Association and Food & Drug Officials will manage the certificate process (issuing certificates, maintaining databases of those trained, collecting fees).

**Trainer Certification Process Summarized**

### Trainer Interview Process

- **Submit Application to Attend TTT (No one will be turned away)**

  - **Attend PSA Full 2 Day TTT Course**
    - At completion, individuals can participate as a team trainer as long as training has lead trainer present

  - Those interested in becoming lead trainers contact PSA to Set Up Interview for Trainer Certification
    - Application reviewed by PSA Interview Panel
    - Date and time of interview scheduled

- **Interview held by teleconference**
  - Committee of no less than 2 evaluates trainer by asking scenario questions designed to demonstrate knowledge in the competency areas

- Interview committee will decide if trainer is qualified. If so, trainer will be provided a certificate certifying them in the competency areas requested as a lead trainer. If not qualified, may request an additional evaluation and interview after 6 months have passed.

- Certified trainers can form teams. Team members can deliver curriculum modules under the supervision of certified lead trainer (must be present), but do not have to participate in interview process.

- Organize with AFDO to register a grower training
B. Pilot Grower Training: January 26, 2015 - Hershey, PA – Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention

- Attended by 34 produce growers and 13 observers (Extension educators, FDA, USDA)
- Training was open to public, and despite bad weather, we still had a good turnout.
- Special thanks from Penn State (Luke LaBorde, Lee Stivers) for setting up the conference facility and training logistics.
- Covered all 7 modules including:
  - Introduction to Produce Safety
  - Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training
  - Soil Amendments
  - Wildlife, Domestic Animals, and Land Use
  - Agricultural Water
  - Postharvest Handling & Sanitation
  - How to Develop a Farm Food Safety Plan

- See presentation slides for attendee demographics

Summary of Key Grower Training Outcomes

- Content was simple and easy to understand. Slides presented had been modified after pilot Train-the-Trainer as per noted in above section.
- Growers liked having handouts, BUT confused when slides presented were out of order on print versions (slides that are optional or when a speaker rearranged the slides). We will be revisiting this issue to see how we can maintain trainer flexibility for presentation style, but keep growers from getting confused.
- Need for revisions noted in Wildlife, Domestic Animals, and Land Use and Soil Amendment Modules – mostly to reduce redundancy and streamline the content.
- Growers liked the interactive discussion and time for questions.
- Total presentation time was less than the allotted 7 hours.

Questions & Discussion

- If trainers use all the slides and cover all the content, can they add on additional information pertinent to their growers?
  - Yes – you can add slides, but you cannot remove or change content on the PSA slides themselves including the text. Pictures can be changed.
- Will growers who have already attended GAPs training need to attend again?
  - Yes – if they need to satisfy the regulatory requirement, they will need to attend the standardized curriculum recognized by the FDA. No one will be ‘grandfathered’ in. This content is new to everyone since it includes how to comply with the regulation.
- If one person is qualified and becomes certified through the interview process, can they train solo, not as a team?
Absolutely. There is no requirement to train as a team. Many prefer to train as teams if they have the resources available, but training solo is fine too if you become certified by attending the 2 day Train-the-Trainer and participating in the interview.

- Do you expect exempt and non-exempt growers to come to the training?
  - Absolutely.

- What is the PSA’s timeline for revision of the curriculum slide sets based on the pilot feedback?
  - We are currently making edits to the slide sets. Fortunately, there were only minor edits required after the Grower Pilot. The major of edits will be adding and calling out specific information that is related to the regulations versus best practices. We anticipate slide sets being complete and sent to our graphic designer early this spring.

- Using the Seafood HACCP program as an example, individuals were NOT required to attend the training course if they could prove proficiency in writing a HACCP plan or through other experience. Will this apply similarly to produce growers – i.e. if they have experience to prove they are competent at produce safety, will they be required to attending training?
  - The FDA is carefully considering comments to the docket regarding training requirements currently. Several comments to the proposed produce rule noted that, in past rulemakings such as, Juice HACCP and Seafood HACCP, that the FDA has required training OR experience. The FDA established the Alliances to develop standardized curriculum to develop training to meet training needs.
  - Based on the requirement outlined in § 112.22(c) “at least one supervisor or responsible party from the farm to successfully complete food safety training at least equivalent to that received under the standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration”

- Is there going to be an RFP or bids issued for developing an online course?
  - The PSA has no idea whether they will issue RFPs for this purpose. The PSA does have funds in its’ budget to update the Cornell National GAPs Online Course.

- Can educators still teach basic GAPs without being a certified trainer?
  - Yes. You can teach GAPs without being a certified trainer. If your growers need to become certified per the Produce Safety Rule though, you will need to become a certified trainer or bring in a certified trainer to deliver the standard curriculum to certify growers for the Produce Safety Rule current proposed training requirement.

- When can we anticipate the PSA to launch the Train-the-Trainer workshops?
  - We are hoping for May 2015 and working towards this goal.
We plan to hold them in geographically diverse areas so that we can limit travel for the trainers and make sure training is available to all interested individuals.

III. Other Items

• **Survey Opportunity for Produce Growers:**
  • Goal: Better understand how FDA’s proposed rule on produce safety under the Food Safety Modernization Act will impact fruit & veg growers.
  • Participants have the opportunity to enter a drawing for a free Apple iPad after completing the survey.
  • Dr. Erik Lichtenberg by email at elichten@umd.edu or telephone at (301) 405-1279.
  • **SURVEY LINK:** http://www.arecdept.umd.edu/foodsafety
  • **PASSWORD:** CORNELL

• **Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Comment Period Open until March 13, 2015**
  • The Environmental Impact Statement examines the effects that the FDA's proposed Produce Safety Rule may have on natural resources as well as how those impacts are weighed against other factors. The FDA released the draft EIS on January 12, 2015 to assesses the environmental and socioeconomic impacts for the provisions within the proposed Produce Safety Rule that the FDA has determined may significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The FDA held a public meeting on February 10, 2015 to discuss the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed rule and to solicit oral stakeholder and public comments. To learn more about the EIS, public meeting discussion, and how to submit comments, visit the following FDA web links.
    • **EIS Homepage:**
    • [http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm396564.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm396564.htm)
    • **EIS Public Meeting Handout:**
    • **Questions & Answers on the EIS with Annette McCarthy:**
    • [http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm429368.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm429368.htm)

IV. Call Wrap Up:

• **Future Produce Safety Educator Meeting Agendas:** Let us know what you would like to talk about! Send us your ideas, concerns, comments and we will add it to the next monthly meeting.
• **Next meeting:** TBD, discussing calendar dates in mid to late March or first week of April.
• **Thanks to everyone for taking time to participate in this call!**