Produce Safety Alliance

Cornell University
Department of Food Science
Produce Safety Alliance

- Cooperative Agreement between Cornell University, FDA, and USDA
- Established PSA in October 1, 2010
- Project length: 3 years
Primary Goals

• Education and outreach to improve understanding and implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and co-management strategies

• Developing a standardized training and education program to assist with the implementation of FDA's requisite produce safety regulation
Primary Goals cont.

• Developing a standardized training and education program to assist in understanding benefits of co-management and integrating these principles while meeting the regulation

• Collecting and providing access to information related to produce safety, GAPs, co-management and FDA's produce safety regulation
Target Audiences

• Fresh produce growers, packers, and grower cooperatives with special emphasis on small and very small scale farms and packinghouses

• Regulatory personnel

• All others interested in produce food safety, GAPs, and co-management
Prior to Rule

Focus is on increasing grower/packer

• Fundamental knowledge of on-farm produce safety issues and importance of preventing contamination

• Ability to assess risks

• Implementation of food safety practices to prevent contamination and reduce risks

• Documentation of on-farm food safety practices

• Understanding of the benefits of co-management of food safety and the environment
Post Rule Release

• Promote the understanding of, and compliance with, the FDA Produce Safety Regulation

• Integrate new scientific findings and current research results on produce safety and environmental co-management into GAPs educational materials as it evolves
PSA Guidance

• Executive Committee
  – Oversight to ensure cooperative agreement is properly executed in time allotted

• Steering Committee
  – Diverse representation from produce industry
  – Leadership for the WCs
  – Guidance for curriculum development
    • Prioritizing topic areas
    • Content inclusion
    • Focus group facilitation
PSA Guidance (cont.)

• Working Committees
  – Open participation from all sectors of produce industry
  – Ensure all curriculum topic areas are reviewed
  – Identify challenges to understanding and implementation
  – Facilitate identification of educational materials that are effective and functional
  – Ensure best science available is reviewed
Curriculum Development Process

- Identify GAPs Challenges
- Set Goals
- Develop Objectives
- Create Content

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Identifying GAPs Challenges

- Asking WC members to think broadly and openly about challenges to both understanding and implementing GAPs with a focus on small scale operations
- A big, messy, time consuming exercise
- Many things may be not be a surprise but it needs to be done to ensure nothing is missed and to provide an opportunity for new things to be identified
- Helps inform the goal setting process
Set Goals

- Of all the challenges identified, what are the things farmers need to know to reduce risks
- Prioritize the list of topics to identify the most critical areas
- Create a list of goals that can be achieved within the project time/resources
  - Example: All workers on the farm are trained in proper hygiene practices to reduce food safety risks
Develop Learning Objectives

• Working from the goals, define things that must be learned to reach the goals. Learning objectives could include
  – Farmers should understand that foodborne pathogens can be transmitted by people
  – Farmers should understand the importance of worker training to reducing risks
  – Farmers should understand basic concepts of adult learning so that they can offer effective training programs
Create Content

- Develop information that allows the learner to gain the necessary knowledge
- Identify materials and media that facilitate the learning process
- Incorporate content into curriculum that utilizes effective materials and media
- Test curriculum through focus groups and gather evaluation data
- Refine content/materials/media
Questions about this CDP

- Identify GAPs Challenges
- Set Goals
- Develop Objectives
- Create Content
Important Attributes of the PSA

• Open participation to all those interested in produce safety
  – Website
  – General Listserve
  – PSA Conference
  – Working Committees
Important Attributes of the PSA

• Starting at a point of strength
  – Collaborating with those who already know the research and are active in training
  – Identifying materials already in use
  – Many good things available
Important Attributes of the PSA

- Focus resources for best outcome
- Target areas where information for farmers is lacking or needs updated based on best science
- Expand the collection of materials that are available
- Support others to reach farmers across the US
Up to Date

• Website is active
  www.producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu

• Many signed up for the general list serve and Working Committees (WCs)
  – Farmers, Industry representatives, Government personnel

• WCs #1-7 have started to meet
  – WCs # 8-10 will be scheduled soon
Questions?

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