



## PSA Lead Trainer Applicant Scoring

The following information is provided to help PSA Lead Trainer applicants understand the PSA Lead Trainer Review Process that determines if they meet the basic qualifications for becoming a PSA Lead Trainer. Applications are evaluated using a standardized rubric that includes reviewing two applications submitted by each applicant (i.e., PSA Trainer Application and PSA Supplemental Application). Each evaluation is completed by at least two reviewers. A list of reviewers and their institutions is posted on the [PSA Trainer Information webpage](#).

### Review of the PSA Trainer Application

Applicants complete the PSA Trainer Application prior to attending a PSA Train-the-Trainer Course. The evaluation includes using a standardized rubric to score the applicant's formal educational background, training and educational experience, and produce production and handling experience.

### Formal Educational Background

Applicants may qualify through a combination of formal education, relevant certifications, or other educational experiences. Education that will help an applicant qualify in this area include:

- An Associate's, Bachelor's, or other advanced degree in a relevant competency area
- Certifications or short courses including, but not limited to Good Agricultural Practices, Certified Crop Advisor, HACCP, or other course relevant to produce safety
- Other educational experiences listed by the applicant

It is not necessary to have a formal degree to qualify in this area, but an applicant must have sufficient educational experiences in the relevant competency areas. An applicant may qualify through having several relevant certifications or other educational experiences.

### Training and Teaching Experience

Applicants may qualify in this area by having experience teaching produce safety and other related courses in the past. The number of years of produce safety training experience affects the applicant's qualification, however, a PSA Trainer new to the area of produce safety may also qualify if they have many years of experience teaching other food safety courses.

Examples of courses that affect an applicant's ability to qualify in this area include:

- Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)
- Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)
- FSPCA Qualified Individual Training
- Writing a Farm Food Safety Plan
- Helping a Grower Prepare for an Audit or Inspection
- ServSafe®
- Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP)
- Better Process Control School
- Other courses relevant to food safety

## Produce Production & Handling Experience

An applicant may qualify in this area by experience with produce production and/or handling. Examples of relevant experiences include growing fruits and vegetables commercially, having provided outreach or technical expertise to produce growers or packers, or other relevant experiences that indicate knowledge of fruit and vegetable production. Other experiences may include:

- Having experience working in a fruit and vegetable packinghouse
- Having experience in produce retail handling
- Other relevant experiences in fresh produce production

## Review of the PSA Supplemental Application

The PSA Supplemental Application is completed by applicants after attending a 2-day PSA Train-the-Trainer Course. It is intended to assess the applicant’s knowledge in the four competency areas: Produce Safety Scientific Knowledge and Experience, Fruit and Vegetable Production Knowledge, Effective Training Delivery, and Knowledge of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. The applicant must respond to four short answer questions to demonstrate competency in each of the four competency areas. Answers should be as thorough as possible while staying within the 350 word limit. When appropriate, the answer should cite the Produce Safety Rule and any relevant provisions. Additional information on the four competency areas can be found on the PSA website under [Trainer Competency Areas](#).

Each answer is scored against a standardized rubric and given a numerical score that corresponds to how well the answer demonstrates competency. The chart below defines the numerical scores.

Scoring Rubric for Short Answer Questions		
Score	Level of Competency	
1	Below Expectations	The applicant explains concepts incorrectly.
2	Needs Further Evaluation	The applicant seems to understand basic principles, but it is not clear if the applicant could explain or apply the information to others. Interview required.
3	Meets Expectations	The applicant demonstrates the ability to present and explain the content. This may include breaking information down into parts, relating the parts to the overall picture, making judgements based on standards and citing the appropriate regulatory provisions.

Applicants that submit responses that meet expectations will be notified that they have been approved as PSA Lead Trainers. Applicants that submit responses that are below expectations will be notified that they have not met expectations and will be provided with feedback on their responses. If an applicant scores ‘Needs Further Evaluation’ on any responses, they will be provided the opportunity for a telephone interview or e-mail correspondence to clarify their response. In addition, applicants will be asked at least one additional question in the competency area that triggered the interview to verify their competency.

## More information about the PSA Lead Trainer Review Process

**Timeline:** Generally, the review process takes one to two months.

**Attending a PSA Train-the-Trainer Course:** Courses are listed on the PSA website under [Upcoming Train-the-Trainer Courses](#). Information includes location, costs, and other details.

**Additional questions or concerns:** If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please contact Betsy Bihn at [eab38@cornell.edu](mailto:eab38@cornell.edu) for clarification.