

Produce Safety

ALLIANCE



<http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/>

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New to the Produce Safety Alliance?

Welcome! We are very glad you've joined us! The fastest way to get up to speed on our progress since 2010 is to visit the PSA website! Here are some key resources you may want to check out!

Quick Links

[PSA-FDA Question & Answer Series](#)

[Archived PSA Newsletters](#)

[Working Committee Archives](#)

[2012 - Summary of Farmer Focus Groups](#)

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Hello Produce Safety Alliance Members!

We hope this newsletter finds you well and that you are having a great start to spring! It has been a while since we've sent an update, but we have lots to share about the progress with curriculum and training development, as well as lots of updates on The Food Safety Modernization Act.

The PSA is continually growing - our listserve now reaches close to 900 individuals throughout the United States and beyond. For many of you, this is your first time receiving this newsletter - so be sure to check out the PSA resources highlighted in this newsletter. We have made every effort to make our progress as organized and transparent as possible, so if you have any additional questions, feel free to contact us or peruse the PSA website for a larger repository of information.

PSA Curriculum Update

The seven PSA curriculum modules are now complete and are being reviewed by the PSA Steering and Executive Committees including farmers, members of the produce industry, Extension educators, and regulatory officials.

Although the key provisions within the revised Produce Rule have not yet been released, we plan to move forward with training throughout the country prior to the final regulation. There is a great value in disseminating information now related to implementing good agricultural practices on the farm. We are planning to launch the first Train-the-Trainer pilot programs this summer and enable educators to train growers in their own states through the fall and winter.

All Train-the-Trainer requirements, locations, and dates will be widely publicized, through this listserve and our website - we will share information as soon as we have it, so please stay tuned!

Sister Alliance Updates

[Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance \(FSPCA\)](#)



The Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance, in collaboration with the FDA, will be hosting quarterly webinars to update stakeholders on the progress of the Alliance. Representatives of the FDA and FSPCA Editorial, Continuation, Outreach and Animal Foods subcommittees will provide information on current status and next steps.

[Sprout Safety Alliance \(SSA\)](#)



Sprout growers and those working with sprout growers should be sure to stop by the Sprout Safety Alliance's website to access [currently available resources](#) that address safe sprouting practices and information on new curriculum materials as well as future training opportunities.

FDA to Re-open Comment Period for Key Provisions of the Proposed FSMA Rules Affecting Farmers This Summer

After initial review of over 17,000 comments submitted to the docket, the FDA plans to re-open key provisions of the proposed Produce Rule for comment early this summer including:

- Water quality standards
- Raw manure and compost
- Mixed use facilities
- Procedures for withdrawing the qualified exemption for certain farms

This means you will have another opportunity to make your voice heard! We highly encourage your participation in this process. The FDA greatly values your insight in drafting a document that better suits the needs of produce farmers across the country. We will send announcements through our listserve when the proposed rule has been re-released including information about where and how to comment, but you can also sign up to receive notifications directly from the [FDA E-mail Updates](#) site.

FDA's Operational Strategy for Implementing FSMA

Check out the newly published planning document for the next phase of [FSMA - Implementation](#). The FDA's plan to implement the produce standards will entail a broad, collaborative effort for foster awareness and compliance - one of which hinges on providing education and technical assistance, such as the work that has been done through this alliance and others. We appreciate the great network of collaborators in agriculture, academia, industry, and government that have participated in the PSA and know this will be key in delivering effective produce safety education and training programs for farmers.

Read more from the [FDA Voices Blog](#) about the comprehensive overhaul of our food safety system.

FDA Traceability Initiatives & Identifying High Risk Foods

Connecting the dots in a foodborne illness or outbreak investigation can be extremely challenging. Product tracing systems can help government agencies, farms, and food companies take action quickly to remove implicated foods from the marketplace in the event of a foodborne illness outbreak to prevent further illnesses. A major FDA initiative outlined in Section 204 includes drafting requirements for enhanced tracking and tracing of food as well as recordkeeping. The first step towards developing these requirements was completed when the FDA, in conjunction with the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), published their [final report](#) from two pilot traceability studies.

In addition, the FDA is required under Section 204(d)(2) of FSMA to designate high-risk foods for which recordkeeping requirements are appropriate and necessary to effectively track and trace foods during a foodborne illness outbreak or event. A [draft approach document](#) to designate high risks foods was released on February 4, 2014 and the comment period has been extended to May 22, 2014 - so there is still time to provide your input!

[Comment Now!](#)

Submit written submissions to:

Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852.

All submissions received must include the Agency name and Docket No. FDA-2014-N-0053.

For more information regarding product tracing visit the [FDA website](#).

Summer Meetings & Conferences

There are still many things to learn about produce safety, but luckily there are many people conducting research to help provide science-based solutions to prevent foodborne illness outbreaks associated with fresh produce. Consider attending one or both of the following conferences this summer to learn more and brush up on your technical produce safety knowledge.



- [Center for Produce Safety - 5th Annual Produce Research Symposium](#)
 - June 24 & 25, 2014 - Newport Beach, CA
- [International Association for Food Protection \(IAFP\) - PSA Special Session!](#)
 - August 3-6, 2014 - Indianapolis, IN
 - The Produce Safety Alliance will be hosting a special evening session on Monday August 4th from 5:15-6:45pm entitled 'Update on the Produce Safety Alliance - Education and Extension for Fresh Produce Growers'. In addition to updates from Betsy and myself on the Alliance, invited speaker and FDA Produce Safety Staff Director, Samir Assar, will provide his insight into the FDA's commitment to produce safety outreach and education. We hope to see you there!

New Media for GAPs Education and Training

Through the Produce Safety Alliance, we are very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with land-grant university collaborators all over the country who provide GAPs education and extension to fresh produce farms. With increasing buyer requirements for food safety as well as the proposed requirements in the FSMA Produce Rule, educational materials, training, and technical assistance are a high priority. This month, we are excited to share two new produce safety related resources to add to your toolbox.



University of Hawaii at Manoa

From aquaponics to pesticide safety, the food safety team at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources has a [wide variety of tools and publications](#) for use on the farm and in the packinghouse.

For additional information on these resources, please contact Jim Holler (hollyer@hawaii.edu).



New Mexico State University

Are you working with organic growers who are managing NOP certification as well as GAPs audits? The team at New Mexico State University has developed an [informative website](#) to aid in the dynamic management of organic system plans and Good Agricultural Practices. No need to duplicate the paperwork effort - there are lots of helpful hints to share!

For additional information, contact Nancy Flores (naflores@nmsu.edu).

Contact Us!

Our general listserve is still the best way to stay in touch with the PSA! To sign up, please visit our website at <http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/>. Already signed up? Please share this newsletter with friends and colleagues who might also be interested in produce safety - we are always looking to expand the PSA's reach!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, comments, or ideas.

Take care,

Gretchen & Betsy

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