

September 25, 2012

Hello Produce Safety Alliance Members!

With fall farmers' markets in full swing, there certainly has not been a lack of colorful displays packed full of fresh fruits and vegetables. We hope this autumn will allow you and your family to enjoy an abundance of safe, wholesome produce in whatever region you live. We've included a few resources at the end of the newsletter to help you brush up on your food safety skills before heading out to the market.

A Lesson Learned: PSA Curriculum Learning Objective Development

One of the most important questions we ask ourselves constantly is "What do we want our audience to be able to do by the completion of the curriculum?" From the very beginning, the PSA has been focused on developing content that will be concise and useful in reducing the risks associated with fresh produce. Our process is highlighted in the diagram to the right. The first step, identifying GAPS challenges, was accomplished by facilitating 10 national working committees, hosting an educational material conference, and conducting farmer focus groups to collect information. We have been very fortunate to have so many individuals with broad expertise participate in this process and willingly provide recommendations.



Identifying challenges and understanding grower expectations allowed us to set *curriculum goals*. Our focus is on building a one day workshop with seven hours of dedicated instruction time that includes six modules: Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training; Water; Soil Amendments; Wildlife and Domestic Animals; Equipment, Facilities, and Sanitation; and Developing a Farm Food Safety Plan.

To meet our goals, our next step is to create specific *learning objectives* that describe what the learner will know or be able to do as a result of the attending a PSA training. There are four main benefits to using learning objectives in curriculum development; 1) provide consistency in the design of instruction, 2) guide the selection of course content, 3) provide a basis for evaluating what participants have learned, and 4) help students organize their own learning. We will continue to share our progress with you and look forward to collaboration to foster effective educational programs in your state by using techniques grounded in science and educational design.

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For those of you that made it this far through the newsletter, congratulations! As much as we food safety nerds love to talk about educational design, we promise there are some exciting things coming in the next few months with the creation of content. To avoid reinventing the wheel, we hope you will be willing to share your tools and resources with us or let us know if you see an innovative food safety program.

Spotlight Series: Produce Handler Input Opportunity!

As a national alliance, we strive to supply both learners and researchers with the most comprehensive database of educational materials and resources to keep fresh fruits and vegetables safe. Much of the information we have collected via the working committee process, farmer focus groups, and through the educational materials conference have helped us shape an effective training program for farmers, packers, regulatory personnel, and others interested in the safety of fresh produce. However, without access to credible, science-based information, we would not be nearly as far as we are in understanding produce safety as we are today.

This month we are highlighting researchers from the **University of Rhode Island** and **Cornell University** who are looking for produce handlers to participate in an on-line survey to share their awareness of non-thermal food processing technologies. The survey does not ask for any proprietary information, is completely anonymous, and the researchers promise the survey will take only 15 minutes.

You may contact the researchers directly if you have any comments or questions:
Lori Pivarnik, pivarnik@uri.edu or Randy W. Worobo, rww8@cornell.edu

Please note that the researchers are also surveying shellfish handlers, in case some of the questions sound nautical.

Please take 15 minutes to access and complete the survey here:
<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22FBY9ESZCD>.

The survey will be open until the end of September. Thank you for helping the researchers collect data for their project to continually add to the greater body of knowledge to reduce food safety risks in fresh produce.

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Food Safety at the Market!

Farmers' markets are a great way to stock up on locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. Both producers and consumers need to be aware of potential food safety risks that exist, not only in the grocery store but at the market too! Below are just a few resources that can help farmer's market managers, vendors, and consumers keep fresh produce safe.

The Ohio State University Extension Fact Sheet:

[Produce Safety at the Farm Market: A Guide for Farmers and Sellers](#)

Farmers' Market Federation of New York:

[Food Safety Recommendations for Farmers' Markets](#)

Colorado State University:

[Colorado Farm-to-Table Food Safety](#)

Colorado State University's new Farm-to-Table Food Safety website was developed to enhance the accessibility of food safety resources and information to help Coloradans lower the risk of foodborne illnesses all along the food chain--from the producer to the consumer. The Extension website features information targeted to those who Grow, Prepare, or Eat food. On the Grow page, find resources for farmers' market vendors and managers; learn how to create a farm food safety plan; or view recorded GAPs/GHPs training webinars. Find all this and more at <http://farmtotable.colostate.edu/index.php>.

Join Us!

Our listserv is always expanding and we hope you'll join us! To sign up, please visit our website at <http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/psa.html>. As always, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Betsy Bihn (eab38@cornell.edu) if you have any questions.

Happy Fall,

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