North Central Region
Center for FSMA Training, Extension and Technical Assistance

November 2026

FSPCA Conference

The FSPCA Annual Conference unites food safety professionals, educators, regulators, and industry leaders for engaging discussions on strengthening preventive food safety systems worldwide. The conference features expert presentations, regulatory updates, and opportunities to connect across academia, government, and industry while advancing global implementation of FSMA through education and outreach.

The four regional centers will be presenting at the evaluation work we have done with the PC trainings. This year's event will be held in Chicago, on November 17-18. In-person registration ends November 11. **JUST ANNOUNCED-** It's possible to register for virtual attendance now. Virtual attendees will have the ability to view the onscreen presentations in real time, hear all sessions, and submit questions through the Q&A box while remaining muted with cameras off. For this option, you can register until Nov. 13.

PSR and Organic Certification

OATS, Produce Safety Alliance, The Organic Center, and other partner organizations have developed a workshop curriculum on the intersection of FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements and the USDA organic regulations. Two two pilot workshops will be held in November. One will be held in Stevens Point, WI, on November 10, from 9am–4pm. The workshop is designed for agricultural professionals who advise farmers in one or both of these domains. The workshop is free, but registration is required.

FDA Reminder to Facilities

FDA Reminds Food Facilities of Biennial Renewal Requirements. Every two years between October 1 and December 31, owners, operators, or agents in charge of a domestic or foreign facility that manufactures, processes, packs, or holds food for consumption by humans or animals in the United States are required to renew their registration with the FDA. Additionally, facilities that are qualified facilities must submit an attestation supporting their qualified facility status during the same time period.

Preventive Controls for Animal Food Curriculum Version 2.0



The FSPCA Animal Food Working Group is completing the final revisions to the updated Preventive Controls for Animal Food Curriculum Version 2.0 and preparing for implementation, with additional curriculum sessions planned for the FSPCA Annual Conference. The Animal Food Working Group is in the final stages of completing technical edits, updating images throughout the curriculum to improve clarity and usability, making minor edits to the workbook, and instructor manuals. As these revisions wrap up, the project will transition into change management focused on implementation, communications, and supporting Lead Instructors as the updated curriculum is introduced.

Ag Water Assessments

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture has compiled two examples of ag water assessments that were completed by Nebraska growers (with identifiable information removed). The FDA offered brief comments to improve the assessments. They are being shared as real-world examples of what assessments can look like. The assessments are also attached to this email. Contact Tory Heisner with questions.

FDA's feedback:

- For Example A, the one piece I'd look to pull from the inspection and maintenance (that's not included in the assessment scenario) is how the irrigation equipment is stored. Granted that detail should be captured in 112.42, but could be useful to include in their record for 112.43.
- Example B is a great way to document the possibility of water changing from agricultural water to not agricultural water, and back and forth. Keeping and updated record of the fluctuation of use of water on farm helps the grower stay on top of their water use, and allows them to be flexible to accommodate a variety of activities.

Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative

The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI), a national leader in Tribal food and agriculture law and policy, has joined The University of Tulsa's College of Law. The move to The University of Tulsa places IFAI at the only law school and at the only research university located on an Indigenous nation reservation. The University of Tulsa campus is within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and UTulsa's North Campus is within the Cherokee Nation.

FTR Training

The FSPCA Food Traceability Rule Training for the Food Industry participant course is a core, industry-oriented training that provides participants with the knowledge that is needed to understand and comply with the FDA's Final Rule on Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods, or Food Traceability Rule (FTR).

IFPTI is hosting a virtual course on November 12- 13, 2026, from 8:00 AM- 3:00 PM, Mountain Time, each day.

FDA Meeting about the FTR



The FDA is hosting a virtual public meeting on November 6, 2026, to give the public an opportunity to share information on implementation of the Food Traceability Rule and areas of remaining concern, specifically as they relate to lot-level tracking and potential flexibilities for compliance.

The virtual public meeting is free and open to the public, but registration is necessary to attend. General registration will remain open until November 5, 2026.

Food Safety Summit

The Summit brings the food safety community together to learn, exchange ideas, and find practical solutions. Whether you're part of a large organization or a smaller team wearing multiple hats, you'll meet people who understand your challenges and can offer new perspectives.

Come for timely education, access to experts and regulators, new solutions, and the opportunity to connect with peers from across the food supply chain.

The Food Safety Summit will be held May 10-13, 2027, in Chicago, IL. Registration is now open.

Please share these opportunities with growers in your area

Free, online GAPs Training - Annalisa Hultberg from the University of Minnesota; Martha Sullins from Colorado State; and Meredith Melendez from Rutgers are planning an online GAPs training. Registration is required for this free class. In two sessions on December 7, (12:00 - 4:00 (CST) and 4:30 - 5:30 (CST)) growers will learn how to identify the produce safety risks on farm and reduce them using GAPs.

- safely manage and use soil amendments, and irrigation and processing water
- prevent contamination from domestic and wild animals
- maintain worker health and hygiene and safe facilities and food contact surfaces
- transport, deliver and build a traceback system for produce

Flooding Research - Tammy Walsky, a PhD Student at Cornell University Food Safety Lab (who works with Don Stoeckel) is doing research on flooding on agricultural lands in New York and similar climates. This research aims to:

- Identify and evaluate the resources
- Pinpoint gaps in current guidance
- Compare perceived food safety concerns and resources needed between Extension educators/ farm support professionals and commercial growers so expectations can be calibrated.

Please share with your growers and encourage them to respond by Dec. 13.

CPS Research Priorities

The Center for Produce Safety (CPS) has released its 2027 Research Priorities. Researchers interested in applying for funding should submit a pre-proposal by Nov. 4. Office hour appointments to discuss the priorities and potential projects can be requested.

New Podcasts

Food Safety Matters Podcast - So, how do we turn food safety knowledge into lasting behavior change and reach consumers where they are? Listen to the conversation with Dr. Mindy Brashears and Carmen Rottenberg on the Food Safety Matters podcast.

On the Beat Podcast - The first episode of Food Safety News: On the Beat, has been released. This the weekly podcast breaks down the biggest stories in food safety and explains what happened, what we know, and why it matters. Two staff from Food Safety News will host the podcast each week. The second episode features Bill Marler and the cyclospora outbreak.

PSA Train-the-Trainer

Register soon for the Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Train-the-trainer (In-Person) course. The Southern Center and University of Florida are co-hosting this training on November 12 and 13, in Lake Alfred, FL. Registration costs $400 and closes Nov. 5.

The NCR FSMA has travel stipends, up to $1000, to help people attend trainings like this.



Fall Professional Development Event

The NCR FSMA Fall Professional Development event was held in Milan, Ohio on October 27-28. The group heard from multiple speakers, toured two farms, and had great discussions. Hope to see you next year at this event, if you work with the Produce Safety Rule. If you have not completed the event evaluation, please do so by November 11. Thank you so much to everyone who made the trip to Ohio. It was great to see people in person!

Ongoing NCR FSMA Programs

Toll-Free Hotline for the Ag Water Rules

The toll-free hotline to ask questions about the agricultural water rules is accepting calls. Speak with the team and receive a researched, expert-approved answer within 72 hours.
1-855-WATR RUL (1-855-928-7785)
The call line is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9:00am-4:00pm, Eastern time. Growers can call now.

Technology Lending Library



The NCR FSMA is organizing a Lending Library for tools and technology. Growers, processors, and educators will be able to check out materials and try them for 90 days. This should allow growers and processors to try different technology and tools that might be helpful in their operations. They can test drive materials before investing money- deciding if the technology works in an operation their size or if the tool will actually save them time.
Educators can borrow technology to demonstrate in their trainings for growers and processors.
The materials will be stored in a trailer that contains several water treatment technologies. The trailer is available to travel to trainings for local growers and processors. Participants will be able to check out materials at those events. Contact us to get on the schedule!

Stipends

The NCR FSMA stipends are available to anyone who is involved in the work of the Center, so if you are reading this newsletter, you are eligible to apply! Stipends can be used for professional development events, like conferences and online trainings. They can also be used for offering trainings in your area (for example, PSA, PC for Human Foods, or FTR).

Joint, Remote PSA Trainings

Six joint, remote PSA trainings have been scheduled for this fall and winter. Unfortunately, the October course was cancelled, due to low enrollment. Growers from all over the country are welcome. If educators from a certain state are leading any of the trainings, growers from those states get a discount on the price. Courses are scheduled for Nov. 12, Dec. 2, Jan. 26, Feb. 11, and March 11. Registration is now open for all the courses, so please share the information with growers in your area. Download a flyer to share with growers from your area.

New on the Clearinghouse

PSA Grower Training Worksheet-

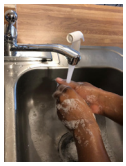
This worksheet is intended to accompany the PSA Grower Training Course, allowing participants to outline goals for the training and apply produce safety concepts to their farms and packinghouses. The module-by-module flow allows for participants to organize their thoughts by topic, resulting in a list of three priorities to reduce microbial risks on their operation.

FDA Registration Guide for Small-Scale Acidified Foods Processors-

This resource by David A French walks through food facilities registration (access.fda.gov) for the Preventive Controls rule and the Acidified Foods rule.

New Resourses

In response to recurring questions from small and midsized producers, educators with the University of Missouri Extension have developed several new factsheets. While some regulatory details are Missouri specific, much of the technical food safety info is rooted in FDA/FSMA requirements and should translate well across the region. Whitney Schmidt and Kantha Channaniah worked together on these resources. Find information on Garlic Infused Oil; Elderberry Jam & Jelly; Canned Corn, Green Beans, & Other Low Acid Foods; Hot Pepper Jelly; and more to be published soon.



Upcoming NCR FSMA Meetings

The next **NCR FSMA webinar** will meet on Thursday, November 19, at 2:00pm, Central time. Dr. Kristen Gibson, from the University of Arkansas, will be sharing the state of the science on handwashing and hand sanitizer use.

Past Webinars- Phil Tocco spoke about how to best clean Over the Row Blueberry Harvesters. Unfortunately, Ellen forgot to record this webinar (sorry!), but you can watch the recordings of other past meetings in the NCR FSMA Box. Please let us know if you need access to the Box.

The **state inspectors/regulators** will meet next on Friday, November 6, at 9am, Central time.

The meeting for **data/inventory/outreach staff** will be Friday, November 20, at 9am, Central time.

The meeting for **program managers** will be Tuesday, December 8, at 10am, Central time.

Please let us know if you need the call information/link for any of these meetings.

Upcoming Trainers for Growers and Processors

Looking for a training for growers or processors?
You can find the upcoming trainings on the Produce Safety Alliance or Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance websites. Food Traceability Rule trainings can be found on the FSPCA website.

Thank you for your continued involvement with the NCR FSMA!

Sincerely,
NCR FSMA Project Team
Arlene Enderton, Dan Fillius, Phil Tocco, Byron Chaves, and Ellen Johnsen

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