

NCR FSMA 2020 Impact Summary

The North Central Region Center for FSMA Training, Extension and Technical Assistance (NCR FSMA) is a collaboration of on-farm food safety specialists from 12 Midwest states. Its purpose is to help small and medium-scale fruit and vegetable growers and processors become compliant with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

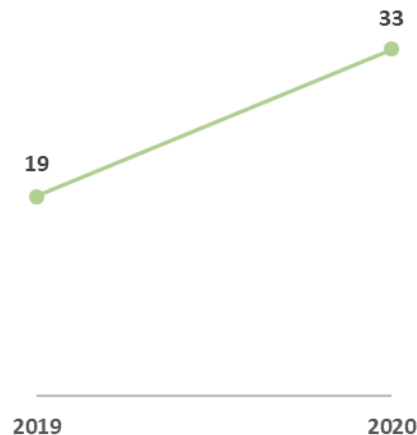
This document shares impacts of the NCR FSMA based on its evaluation in 2020.



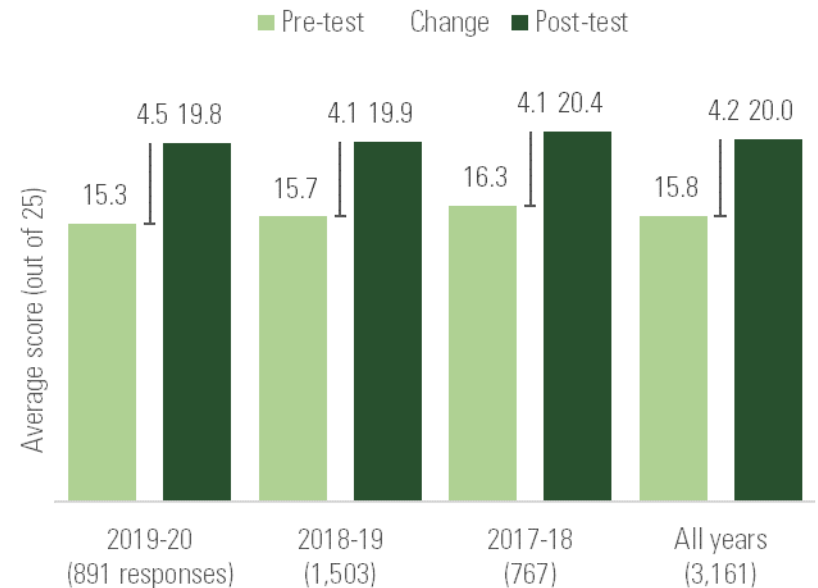
North Central Region
Center for FSMA Training, Extension
and Technical Assistance

Top Outcomes

The average number of people who attend NCR FSMA **listening sessions** nearly doubled from 2019 to 2020.



On average, knowledge assessment scores from the PSA Grower Training **increased by 4.5 points** out of 25 possible in 2019-2020.



Regulator calls led to new opportunities for collaboration:

“Those calls helped change the direction of how we do our farm inventories. We followed suit with [two other states on the call] and that is one change I can contribute one hundred percent to those calls.”

NCR FSMA supported the **Development of FSMA Add-ons and Alternative Curricula:**

The NSAC has *restructured their curriculum* and *improved their lesson plans* based on feedback and resources received from the NCR FSMA.

25% of growers (69 of 276) added or **modified on-farm infrastructure or equipment** to improve food safety practices.



20 growers upgraded or added **hand-washing stations**.



15 replaced or updated **washing or sanitizing equipment**.



9 improved **water or irrigation systems**



8 added or upgraded **restrooms**.



7 built new or upgraded existing **buildings**.



5 upgraded **food contact surfaces**.



5 switched to **picking/storage containers** that can be washed and sani-



4 added **fencing** to deter wildlife from growing areas.

Illustrations: garden box by Luisa Iborro (Noun Project), table by Azam Ishaq (Noun Project)

76% of growers (259 of 341) who responded to the follow-up survey **made a change on their farm to improve food safety practices** since attending the PSA Grower Training.

Recommendations for the Future

1. Consider new strategies for **engaging the larger groups** who have been attending listening sessions.
2. Focus more on **diversity and inclusion** and on **helping small-scale farmers make changes** to on-farm food safety practices.
3. Organize states to **increase access to food safety inspections for exempt growers**.
4. Revisit the question of how the NCR FSMA might engage **small-scale food processors** and professionals who educate them.
5. Be a resource for regulators as they soon undergo the process **of standardization** of the Produce Safety Rule.
6. Encourage partners to apply for **FSOP grants**, especially to fund projects or programs for **underserved audiences**.

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