



# North Central Region

## Center for FSMA Training, Extension and Technical Assistance

April 2020

## NCR FSMA Annual Conference

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The NCR FSMA Annual Conference is going virtual. The meeting will be held on April 2 through Adobe Connect (not our regular Zoom platform). Log on between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, Central time. You can find the [agenda](#) on the NCR website.

The registration deadline is noon on April 1. When you [sign up](#), the call information will be sent to you. Look for the email on March 27.

## FDA Updates

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In early March, the FDA released the [2020 Leafy Greens STEC Action Plan](#), which spells out the actions the FDA plans to take this year in the areas of prevention, response and addressing knowledge gaps. This plan is designed to help foster a more urgent, collaborative and action-oriented approach.

The [FDA has been releasing numerous updates](#) on how its work has been changing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many FDA employees are teleworking; international inspections have been delayed; and most domestic, routine inspections will be delayed.

The general [FAQ website on COVID-19](#) includes frequently asked questions for a general public or consumer audience and links for unique audiences.

New [food-specific FAQ website](#) includes resources available to industry members and consumers on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and food safety.

The FDA hosted a [Phone briefing for FDA stakeholders](#) on March 18. They discussed food safety and food supply questions related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). FDA staff provided an overview of current activities, responded to stakeholders' concerns identified in recent days, and highlighted important FDA resources in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Frank Yiannis, Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response, assured the American public that the [food supply is safe](#) in a press release on March 24.

## COVID-19 Resources

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- Extension Educators Resources from Purdue: Food Safety Implications, in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Simplified Chinese](#), and [Traditional Chinese](#).
- Consumer Information from Purdue: Enhanced Food Safety Practices, in [English](#), Spanish (to be posted soon), [Simplified Chinese](#), and [Traditional Chinese](#).
- From Cornell University Cornell Agricultural Workforce [Development offers this advice for COVID-19](#) Prevention and Control for Farms. “Your farm workforce is not immune to coronavirus, please begin taking steps to protect yourself and your employees.”
- Cornell Institute for Food Safety’s [compilation of resources](#) including data, guidelines and official statements related to foodborne transmission (no evidence) and effective sanitizers against the causative coronavirus. The Produce Safety Alliance operates as a partner organization with the IFS at Cornell.
- Resources from the [University of Florida](#), including frequently asked questions and preventative measures.
- Resources from [NC State Extension](#), including information in Spanish.
- [Chris Callahan](#), from the North East Center to Advance Food Safety, wrote about the pandemic on his blog.
- Information from the [Farmers’ Market Coalition](#) helps farmers’ market operators respond to new regulations.
- A new article compares the stability of HCoV-19 and SARS-CoV-1 in terms of [Aerosol and surface stability](#) and estimated their decay rates using a Bayesian regression model.

## Produce Safety Alliance Temporary Policy

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The PSA is [temporarily allowing remote delivery](#) of PSA Grower Training Courses during the COVID 19 pandemic. This policy will be in effect until May 31, 2020, with the potential for extending this date pending updates on the pandemic. PSA will rigorously review course evaluations under this temporary policy. PSA reserves the right to revise or rescind the remote delivery option for individual trainers or teams should evaluations indicate this is in the best interest of training participants.

## Spanish-language Train-the-Trainer Postponed

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Minnesota has postponed its two-day Spanish-language PSA Train-the-Trainer (TTT) course. Details will be announced soon. Contact Alexandra Cortes for more information – 651-895-0315, [producesafety.mda@state.mn.us](mailto:producesafety.mda@state.mn.us)

## Reporting Book

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We are assembling a booklet to highlight all of the excellent work each state is accomplishing. Thank you to everyone who already sent in their statistics and stories. If you have not had a chance to do so, please let us know what you would like included on your state page. Please send the information to [Ellen](#) by April 17.

## Job Openings

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### [University of New Hampshire – Extension Specialist in Food Safety](#)

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension seeks a state specialist in Food Safety. The specialist will lead UNH Extension's food safety team in development and delivery of research-based educational programming and technical assistance to farms and food manufacturers. They will be the primary Extension resource for technical assistance to help farms and food manufacturers comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety and Preventive Controls rules as well as other federal and local regulations.

### [Auburn University- Assistant Professor - Fresh Produce Food Safety Specialist](#)

The Department of Horticulture at Auburn University is seeking candidates for a new position – Fresh Produce Food Safety Specialist, Assistant Professor. This is a 12-month, tenure-track position (75% Extension and 25% research). The successful candidate will develop an Extension/research program focused on food safety of fresh produce (from producer to consumer) for fruit and vegetable growers and processors in Alabama.

## Alternate Curriculum

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Is your alternate curriculum ready to be reviewed? Are you in the beginning stages of developing a new curriculum? The NCR FSMA, in conjunction with the Lead Regional Center, the FDA, the USDA, and other partners, has developed a review process. The review process is free for any group or organization who is developing an alternate curriculum. It is designed to be a clear process to help developers meet the equivalency standards.

Organizations can start the first stage when they have descriptions of the proposed learning objectives and learning activities. Find out more on the [Alternate Curriculum](#) page on the NCR FSMA website. Contact [Angela](#) with questions.

## Upcoming NCR FSMA Meetings

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The **Listening Sessions/ Webinars** happen the third Thursday of every month at 2:00 Central time. Join us for the next meeting on April 16. Kristin Esch will be leading a discussion on inspection case scenarios. We had planned to cover this during the annual conference.

### Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

Join the meeting.

Or, go to <https://iastate.zoom.us/join> and enter meeting ID: 845 702 039

### Join from dial-in phone line:

Dial: +1 646 876 9923 or +1 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 845 702 039

### Update from the last meeting:

If you missed the March 19 where Brandon Carpenter discussed keeping animal scat out of produce areas, you can [catch up on our website](#).

The online meeting for inspectors/state regulators happens the first Friday of the month at 9:00 am Central time. State government staff take turns leading a discussion, and there's time to share what's happening in your state and ask questions. The next meeting is scheduled for April 3.

### Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

Please click this URL to start or join. <https://iastate.zoom.us/j/628849382>

Or, go to <https://iastate.zoom.us/join> and enter meeting ID: 628 849 382

### Join from dial-in phone line:

Dial: +1 646 876 9923 or +1 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 628 849 382

## Educational Add On Updates

### Ensuring Food Safety in the Vineyard: Table Grapes



**Highlighted Resource**

### Highlighted Resource

Ensuring Food Safety in the Vineyard: Table Grapes document includes PSR citations and training checklists. It covers Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training; Visitors and U-Pick Customers; Pre-Harvest, Harvest, and Post-Harvest Risk Assessment; BSAAO; Animals; Water; Food Safety Plans; and Record Keeping.

### New Resource from the NCR FSMA

The [On-Farm Training Guide for Employees and Volunteers](#) have been finalized! These flip-charts can be used as a training guide for employees and volunteers on produce farms. It is broken into Pre-Harvest, Harvest, and Post-Harvest activities and can be used in one session or multiple sessions.

**Updated resources from the University of Minnesota**

The University of Minnesota [recently updated their factsheets](#) that are GAPs and FSMA PSR related. They cover Handwashing; Cleaning and Sanitizing; GAP Audits; On-Farm Toilets; and Water Testing.

Have a new resource you created? Let us know and we'll highlight in the next newsletter and on social media.

**Resource being edited by the subgroups**

- FSMA Summary for Midwest Hops Growers: This document is to assist those who grow Hops with compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule.

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Thanks for your continued interest in the North Central Region Center for FSMA Training, Extension, and Technical Assistance as we develop the necessary foundation for future collaboration. If you have specific questions or feedback, please email [ncrfsma@iastate.edu](mailto:ncrfsma@iastate.edu).

Sincerely,

NCR FSMA Training Center Team

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