



# North Central Region

Center for FSMA Training, Extension  
and Technical Assistance

December 2020

## NCR Annual Conference 2021

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The dates for the annual conference have been set. We'll be gathering virtually on **February 11, 18, and 25 from 1:00-4:00 pm, Central time each day.**

## New FDA Staff – A note from Kristin Esch

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Hi All! I am excited to share with you that on November 9<sup>th</sup> I began working for FDA in the Produce Safety Network. I will be transitioning into Theresa Klamann's role since she has retired. I know that I have big shoes to fill and I will strive to provide you with the same professionalism and expertise as she did. As of now, I will be the North Central Region contact for any PSR questions you may have as well as education and outreach or just general FDA support. I am so happy that I am able to continue to work with all of you. During my time as the Produce Safety Specialist for Michigan I had the privilege to meet and work with many of you and the dedication you show to your states and your farmers success is inspiring. I'm excited to start my new role and look forward to working with all of you. Please do not ever hesitate to reach out. My email is [Kristin.esch@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Kristin.esch@fda.hhs.gov)

\*\*As of the date of this article I do not yet have a cell phone. I will provide my number as soon as I can.

## Partner Updates

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Have a program you'd like to share? [Let us know](#) and we'll add it to the list.

UC ANR and UC Davis are conducting a [survey of consumers](#) to identify which types of specialty Asian produce are almost always cooked before eating, so that Southeast Asian and other small-scale farmers can receive exemptions from federal food safety regulations for low-risk crops.

[Practical Farmers of Iowa](#) are on track to host 60 virtual field days in 2020 and have learned a lot along the way. The presentation covered common planning challenges, equipment

considerations, best practices and tips learned so far, and outline the technical behind-the-scenes steps necessary to pull the event off.

Farmer Outreach Coordinator Maggie Norton shared all about this during [“Virtual Field Days: How-to & Best Practices Webinar.”](#)

MOSES, GrassWorks, Iowa Organic Association, OGRAIN, the University of Wisconsin, and Fairshare CSA Coalition are sponsoring a 5-in-1 virtual event. **[Growing Stronger: Collaborative Conference on Organic & Sustainable Farming](#)** will take place online Feb. 22-27, 2021. Registration opens Dec. 1, 2020. Admission will be \$125, with a \$25 discount through December.

NECAFS is pleased to announce the release of an educational resource for farmers and food producers. The new website answers [key legal questions](#) about the FSMA PSR. NECAFS and the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems at Vermont Law School (CAFS) worked together to research commonly asked FSMA Produce Safety Rule legal questions and create educational resources that provide clarity and understanding for our audience.

The University of Minnesota is hosting [On-Farm Food Safety webinars](#) this winter, led by farmer-trainers and Extension educators. The next one happens December 17.

Researchers from Virginia Tech and North Carolina State University are assessing the impact of COVID-19 on farmers markets nationwide. They are seeking input from farmers’ market managers and vendors on business practices implemented in response to COVID-19. They hope to use this data from [this survey](#) to better understand how resources can be developed for these groups.

## Federal Updates

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The FDA shared its [thanks for all food and agricultural workers](#) right before Thanksgiving.

FDA Extends Comment Deadline to Submit Information on Expansion of the Rarely Consumed Raw List for Uncommonly Consumed Produce

The FDA invites those with data, information, and/or comments regarding U.S. consumption patterns of those commodities with no or low reported consumption to submit such information to the agency through [the RFI docket](#).

To assist stakeholders in understanding this new Food Traceability proposal, the FDA is making a number of additional resources available.

[A video recording of the October 26<sup>th</sup> webinar](#) on the First 100 Days of the New Era of Smarter

Food Safety is now available. During this one-hour webinar, Deputy Commissioner Frank Yiannas and leaders of teams working on the four Core Elements of the New Era blueprint discuss the new approach FDA is taking to food safety, leveraging technology and other tools to create a safer and more digital, traceable food system.

An additional resource is a [tool](#) designed to allow users to explore the results of the Risk-Ranking Model for Food Tracing used in the development of the Food Traceability List.

## Produce Safety Alliance remote training updates

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The NCR will cover the cost of PSA manuals and AFDO certificates for collaborative remote trainings (up to 10 participants per state). We're defining "collaborative" as a training where trainers from 2 or more states work together to plan and lead the event (not a training that one state hosts and a grower from another state happens to register for). Money is available until it has all been requested. Trainer sharing money is still available for trainings targeting one state. Contact Ellen if you have questions or would like logistical help during your remote training.



A [list of remote PSA courses](#), sponsored by trainers in the North Central Region, is available on the NCR website. This can be shared with growers in your state, if they are looking for additional options.

A [google calendar](#) that includes more details about the training (including how many spots are reserved for growers in a particular state) is also available. To add your remote courses, [please fill out this survey](#).

The Produce Safety Alliance hosted [webinars focused on teaching the PSA Grower Training remotely](#) in October and November. These webinars will focus on one module with tips for teaching remotely and can now be found online at the PSA website.

## 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 **December 17**. We'll be playing a Jeopardy game!

**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 November 19 call about [Vermont Law School's project on legal issues around produce](#), you can find the recording in the Box. Contact Ellen if you don't have access.

The **meeting for inspectors/state regulators** happens the first Friday of most months 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 group will not meet in December, and will meet **Friday, January 8**, because of the holiday on Jan. 1. Discussion topic is sanitizers. Contact [Ellen](#) for call information.



State employees responsible for **farm inventories** will meet on **Friday, December 18**, at 9:00 am Central time. If you'd like to learn more about the different platforms/programs that states are using for their inventories, please plan to join the call. Contact [Ellen](#) for call information.

## Funding Available

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[Funds are available](#) to help NCR partners (anyone who participates in NCR activities) attend virtual trainings/events. Under most circumstances, the NCR will reimburse you after the event for the registration fee.

The mentoring program and the trainer sharing program also have funding available.

## Upcoming PSA Courses

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Indiana: Jan. 15 and 25; Feb. 19; Mar. 19; Apr. 9 (in-person)

Iowa: Dec. 1-2; Jan. 13-14; Feb. 2-3 (all remote courses)

Michigan: Dec. 1; Jan. 12; Feb. 9; March 9 (all remote courses)

Minnesota: Dec. 15; Jan. 12-13; Feb. 9; Mar. 13 (all remote)

Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota: Dec. 8-9 (remote)

Wisconsin: Dec. 15-16 (remote)

Online course: begins every two weeks

Check out the [Calendar](#) for postings of PSA courses offered nationally.

Find a list of [registered PSA Trainers](#).

## Upcoming FSPCA Courses

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Illinois:	PC Human Food: Dec. 1, 7, 8, 14, and 16; Jan. 11, 13, 19, and 27; Feb. 8 and 16; Mar. 2 and 8; Apr. 12 FSVP: Dec. 10; Feb. 11
Iowa:	PC Human Food: Dec. 7; Jan. 12
Michigan:	PC Human Food: Jan. 12; Feb. 9 FSVP: Jan. 19; Mar. 2 and 30
Nebraska:	PC Human Food: Dec. 2
Ohio:	PC Human Food: Dec. 8
Wisconsin:	PC Human Food: Dec. 8 and 14; Feb. 9; Mar. 1
Online:	Human Food: Dec. 1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, and 21; Jan. 25; Feb. 10 and 22; Mar. 9 and 22; Apr. 20 and 23 PC Animal Food: Dec. 2, 7, and 9; Jan. 5 and 8; Feb. 1; Mar. 1; Apr. 21 FSVP: Dec. 1, 7, 10, 15, 16, and 17; Jan. 12, 15, and 19; Feb. 8, 9, 11, and 16; Mar. 9, 11, 16, and 18; Apr. 6 and 8

Check out the [calendar](#) for postings of FSPCA courses offered nationally.

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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

Angela M Shaw, Project Director (FDA Center)

Anirudh R. Naig, NCR FSOP Coordinator

Ellen Johnsen, Project Manager

Joe Hannan, Project Director (USDA Center)

Arlene Enderton, Project Evaluator

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