



# North Central Region

## Center for FSMA Training, Extension and Technical Assistance

**December 2024**

### **NCR FSMA Annual Conference**

[2025 NCR FSMA Annual Conference](#)- April 23-24, to be held in Olathe, KS (45 minutes from the Kansas City Airport). See you at the Kansas State University Olathe campus! Registration costs \$75 and is now open. There is a block of hotel rooms available at a nearby hotel.

### **FSOP Awards Announced**

USDA NIFA has officially announced the recipients of the [Food Safety Outreach Program](#) for this year. Congratulations to the three awardees from the North Central Region- Maile Auterson, Manreet Bhullar, and Phil Tocco. This round of funding also includes the NCR FSMA center award. NIFA is investing \$9.6 million in 23 projects under its Food Safety Outreach Program, which provides customized food safety education, training and technical assistance for operators of small to mid-size farms and food processing facilities; veteran, beginning and underserved farmers and ranchers; and small-scale vegetable and fruit merchant wholesalers.

### **Food Safety Lunch Hour Webinar Series**

Byron Chaves will be leading monthly webinars this academic year on “Microbiological Tools for Process Control and Product Acceptance.” Join the [Food Safety Lunch Hour webinars](#) at 12:00 noon, Central time. Registration is required for this free course.

The topic for the December 10th session is Statistical Process Control & Verification of Process Control.

### **Update from the FDA and EPA**



In early November, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), announced the [successful EPA registration of the first antimicrobial product using the revised efficacy protocol for pre-harvest agricultural water](#). This registration, a landmark achievement in their collective efforts to improve food safety, marks the first ever approval of a treatment for use against foodborne pathogens, such as Salmonella and E. coli, in the agricultural water used to grow produce. The registration was made following ongoing work to develop and refine an efficacy protocol to support registration. Prior to this registration, chemical applications for use in pre-harvest agricultural water were limited to treatment for the management of algae and biofilm formation or produce rot, but this approval sets a critical standard for reducing the presence of human pathogens directly.

## **FSPCA Update**

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The Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance has just restructured the FSPCA Technical Assistance Network (TAN), staffed by a dedicated team of food safety experts. Whether you have regulatory or scientific/technical questions, help is just a click away.

The FDA will continue to manage FSMA rule-related questions through their [Technical Assistance Network](#). [Scientific and technical food safety inquiries](#) will now be addressed by a robust network of university extension specialists.

## **IFSH and FSPCA Webinar**

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FSPCA and IFSH are hosting a free webinar on Dec. 12, at 11:00am, Central time- “How to Be Ready for a Recall: Working with FDA and Preparing for the Unexpected”

Tens of millions of pounds of food and hundreds of food companies and their supply chains are affected by recalls annually. By law, companies subject to Preventive Controls for Human and Animal Foods regulation must have a recall plan with four specific components. But to effectively manage and monitor a recall, you need so much more! Join them for this information-packed, 90-minute webinar to learn what you can do to be prepared beyond the required recall plan. The webinar is open to the public, and [registration is required](#).

## **IFSH Agreement Extended**

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In September 2024 the United States Food and Drug Administration awarded Illinois Tech’s [Institute for Food Safety and Health](#) (IFSH) \$3.9 million for the first of a five-year cooperative agreement renewal continuing to support its history of success working toward safer and more wholesome food.

“This continued support indicates that the previous thirty-five-year FDA-Illinois Tech collaboration has been a sound investment” says Brian Schaneberg, IFSH executive director.

## **Contact Webinar**

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On Dec. 10, at 2:30pm Central time, the Contact team will host a webinar about “Unpeeling the Science ~ Onions, Food Safety and the Fight Against Foodborne Pathogens.” Dive into the fascinating science of onions and food safety with Drs. Linda Harris and Joy Waite-Cusic, leading food safety researchers and extension specialists. Over the past decade, they have conducted extensive lab and field studies, contributing to best practices in onion food safety. Join the Contact team

for an in-depth look at the latest research and its real-world implications, then stay for a live, interactive Q&A where Drs. Harris and Waite-Cusic will answer your questions.

## **FDA and Alliance to Stop Foodborne Illness Webinars**

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The FDA and Alliance to Stop Foodborne Illness have announced the days and topics for their 2025 [Food Safety Culture Webinar Series](#). The first webinar will happen Jan. 29 and will cover company culture. Registration is required. Each webinar in the series offers the chance to earn one NEHA-accredited continuing education credit.

## **FDA Update**

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The FDA recently [updated the food code](#). This new supplement updates the 2022 Food Code.

## **FSOP Webinars**

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The 2024 USDA [FSOP National Project Director's Meeting Webinars](#) were held in September. We had two webinar sessions, where we had the opportunity to hear and learn from 13 great FSOP presentations from food safety leaders from around the country.

The webinar recordings and links to the presentations are posted on the Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse website.

## **Supervisor Trainings Available**

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Michigan State University is offering [supervisor training](#) using an online platform. Growers who supervise other workers are encouraged to join one of several sessions this winter and spring. Produce growers from the entire region are welcome to participate. See more information in the attached flier.

## **Sprout Safety Alliance Webinar**

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The Sprout Safety Alliance (SSA), in collaboration with the FDA, invites you to join a free [webinar on testing Spent Sprout Irrigation Water](#) (SSIW) or in-process sprouts for E. coli O157:H7 and Salmonella. The speaker will be Insook Son, Ph.D., Microbiologist, from the FDA's Human Foods Program.

Registration is required for this free event on January 15, 2025, 1:00 to 2:00pm, Central time. This webinar is intended for both sprout growers and laboratories conducting SSIW or in-process sprouts testing. Participants will gain a clear understanding of the PSR testing requirements for SSIW or in-process sprouts, and learn about proper testing procedures to ensure accurate pathogen detection.

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing Workshops**

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Educators from around the region have been collaborating to offer Cleaning and Sanitizing Workshops in several states. Educators from Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin have hosted two different trainings this fall, in Michigan and Wisconsin. The local press covered the [event in Michigan](#).

The FDA put together the curriculum and is currently revising it slightly. The updated curriculum will be available for everyone to use soon.

## **PSA Grower Updates**

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The Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) is hosting update webinars to ensure past PSA Grower Training Course participants understand the new pre-harvest agricultural water requirements. To sign up for a webinar, grower training participants will need their grower training ID number. If they did not receive an email with this information and a list of the opportunities, please have them contact [psatrainers@cornell.edu](mailto:psatrainers@cornell.edu).

## Research Articles for Growers and Processors

We've been gathering articles that educators/regulators share with growers and processors to help answer the question, "Do I really need to do that?"

Please send suggestions to Ellen and we will add the article to the [website](#), so it can be easily found by other educators.



Here's an example of what has been suggested:

[Escherichia coli Survival on Strawberries and Unpacked Romaine Lettuce Washed Using Contaminated Water](#) by Manreet Bhullar, Bridget Perry, Ana Monge, Lillian Nabwiire, and Angela Shaw

## New Resources on the Produce Safety Clearinghouse

### [Fresh Produce Packing Facility Checklist](#)

Packing facilities are an essential part of a fresh produce farm. The checklist from educators at the University of Illinois was developed to help minimize contamination of fresh produce at the packing facility.



### [Commercial Production of Jams, Jellies, and Fruit Butters](#)

Fruit preserves are shelf-stable food products typically made by combining one or more types of fruit with sugar, acid, and pectin, and then concentrating the mixture by boiling or other means until a specific soluble solids content is reached. Also included in this food category are non-standard reduced-sugar jellies and jams and those that contain significant amounts of low-acid ingredients. The science and technology of producing fruit preserves are described, along with applicable federal regulations, in this resource by educators at Penn State.

## NCR FSMA Funding

There is a [\\$500 stipend](#) for each state, each budget year of the project. You can use those funds for professional development events or supplies for trainings geared towards under-served growers or processors. There are a small number of stipends available for creating new resources and reviewing resources through the Clearinghouse.

Please contact Ellen with questions about the stipends and apply on-line.

## NCR FSMA Meetings

There will not be an NCR FSMA webinar in December, but we'll plan to see you on January 16.

Update from last month's meeting: We heard from Joe Masabni, Texas A&M, at the November webinar. He spoke about: "Superhydrophobic coating materials in agriculture: theory and application to enhance food safety."

You can find the recording in the [NCR FSMA Box](#).

The state inspectors/regulators will meet next on Friday, February 7, at 9am, Central time.

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

The meeting for program managers will be Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 10am, Central time.

Please contact us if you need call information for any of these meetings.

### **Upcoming Trainings 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.

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

Visit our [website](#)

Thank you for your continued involvement with the NCR FSMA!

Sincerely,  
NCR FSMA Project Team  
Byron Chaves  
Phil Tocco

Arlene Enderton  
Ellen Johnsen

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is an equal opportunity provider.  
For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries,  
go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext).

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If you'd like to be [removed from the NCR FSMA mailing list](#), please let us know.