



# North Central Region

Center for FSMA Training, Extension  
and Technical Assistance

May 2024

## MSU Texting Service Expands

Michigan State University Extension is pleased to announce the expansion of the free [Produce Safety Texting Service](#) to 11 additional states in the North Central region. The program, which provides farm workers and their employers with one weekly Produce Safety text will now be available to many more growers and their employees.

The aim of the project is to support produce growers in their efforts to train their workers about on-farm produce safety. Subscribers to the service receive a text once a week about a core concept related to on-farm produce safety or the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)-Produce Safety Rule. The texts are short, engaging, and available in English and Spanish!

## Processing Webinars



Join Byron Chaves for a talk entitled, “Why is *Listeria* always in the news? From packinghouses to cheese and everything in between.”

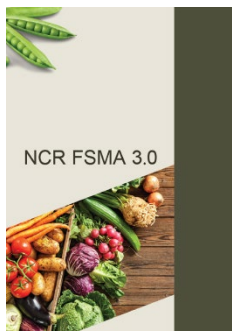
Join the Zoom call on Thursday, June 6, from 2-3:30 pm, Central time.

[Registration is required.](#)

Join Kathir Krishnamurthy for a processing webinar on low acid and acidified foods. Join the Zoom call on Tuesday, July 30, from 2:00-4:00pm, Central time.

[Registration is required.](#)

## NCR FSMA 3.0 Reporting Booklet



The recently-released [NCR FSMA 3.0 Reporting Book](#) shares the highlights of our most current round of funding, 2021-2024.

During this grant cycle, the NCR has worked with 237 partners. This document also includes the new resources we've developed, special events we've hosted, and cooperative evaluation projects.

Check out the good work that has been accomplished!

We printed a few copies of these booklets to share at the annual conference. We'd be happy to send you copies, if you'd like to share them with people in your organization.

## NCR FSMA Annual Conference

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Thanks to the 46 people who made the trip to Chicago for the annual conference. Despite the snow, rain, and sleet, we had a great time on April 3-4. Sixteen people attended the tour of the Illinois



Institute of Technology and the Institute for Food Safety and Health.

We heard lots of great speakers and had a chance to connect with our colleagues around the region. (We're planning to add more time for discussion and questions to next year's agenda, based on this year's evaluation responses.)

In the [NCR FSMA Box folder](#), you can find pictures and some of the slides from presentations. The video recordings of the main sessions should be posted soon. If you're looking for a specific presentation and don't see it, let Ellen know.

## FSPCA and Sprout Safety Alliance Updates

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The 8th FSPCA Annual Conference will be held November 19-20 at the Chicago Marriott Southwest in Burr Ridge, IL.

Please be advised that the length of time that FSPCA Lead Instructor applications remain in good standing is changing. Effective January 1, 2025, any incomplete or approved LI application that is  $\geq 3$  years old will expire.

The Sprout Safety Alliance will be delivering another instructor-led virtual Part 2 of the [Sprout Grower Blended Courses](#) in May.

12:00 – 4:00 PM Central Time on May 21 and 22, 2024 (in two 4-hour sessions)



The SSA will be hosting a free webinar outlining the changes and updates to FDA Sprout Guidance. Join them on June 26, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am CST

for a free SSA webinar outlining the changes and updates to FDA Sprout Guidance that was released in September 2023. Panelists from FDA will guide you through the two guidance documents that outline recommendations for how sprout operations may comply with the Produce Safety Rule. If you would like to submit a question prior to the webinar, please do so using the [registration link](#).

## Communication Survey

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Thank you to the 26 people who responded to the [communication survey](#), either during the Mar. webinar or online. We appreciate your feedback! You can find the results on our website. One of the questions asked if you knew how to raise concerns or make suggestions. You can reach out to anyone on the [PI team](#) or your [state lead](#) with concerns and suggestions.

## Clearinghouse Updates

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The Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety (NECAFS) is seeking feedback on [the Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse](#). This 5-question survey is intended to understand who uses the Clearinghouse, what users like about the site, and what needs are not being met. Results are anonymous and will be used to identify gaps and trends in Clearinghouse site use and improve its design to better serve users. A link to the survey can be found [here](#).

## FDA Updates

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If you missed the April 16 webinar held by FDA and EPA about [Application of Domestic Septage to Agricultural Lands](#), you can find watch the recording. Find links to the [recording and additional factsheets](#) on the NCR website. If you received a copy of these factsheets last fall, at the Fall Professional Development Event in Jefferson City, MO, please discard those and use these updated versions.

The FDA is holding another webinar about mushroom growing on May 30, at 1:00, Central time.

## USDA FSOP Grant Technical Assistance Webinar Series

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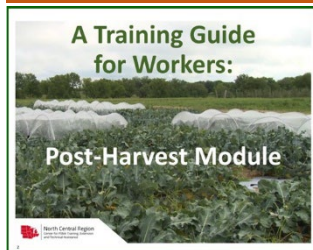
Do you want to learn how to write grants or become a better grant writer?! Texas Tech University, Alabama A&M University, and Iowa State University were awarded the USDA Food Safety Outreach Program (USDA FSOP) Technical Assistance grant titled “Empowering Minority Serving Institutions Food Safety Specialists to Write Successful Food Safety Outreach Program Grants through Education, Training and Technical Assistance”. This grant supports faculty and staff at Minority Serving Institutions and institutions collaborating with Minority Serving Institutions an opportunity to learn more about best practices related to USDA NIFA grant writing. Our team will be hosting a series of **1-hour webinars on specific grant-related topics** from May 6th-22nd at 2pm CST, intending to strengthen MSIs’ organizational systems and increase the effectiveness of grantsmanship, which will result in Capacity Building and expansion of research and extension/outreach portfolios.

- Do you have summer grant writing goals?!
- Do you have a grant idea?!
- Do you have a rejected grant that needs re-submission?!
- Do you need accountability for doing more grant writing?!

This summer, we will have a **grant writing group** on Wednesdays from 10 am to 1 pm CST via Zoom. We will start each session with a round-robin of grant writing goals for that day and have a progress spreadsheet to track grant writing goals (with accountability). Our team will be available to assist you as you develop, re-design, or update your grant applications. [Sign-up](#) This work is supported by the Food Safety Outreach Program [grant no. 2023-70020-40631] from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Visit their [website for more information](#). Questions can be directed to [Dr. Angela Shaw](#), Professor, Texas Tech University.

## Highlighted NCR FSMA Resource

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NCR FSMA partners collaborated to create a [Training Guide for Workers and Volunteers](#). These guides can be used as flipcharts or PowerPoint slides, depending on how farms prefer to train their workers. Some of the information Pre-Harvest, Harvest, and Post-Harvest Guides overlaps (for example, handwashing procedures), so a farm may choose not to print every page if they are using all three guides. The PowerPoint presentation has a combined guide.

## Regional PSA Evaluation Journal Article

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Evaluators from each regional center worked with Produce Safety Alliance staff to write an [evaluation journal article](#), utilizing their combined knowledge assessment data. The article was recently published. It explains how the course is increasing knowledge and that a new tool should be developed as FSMA implementation enters a new stage.

## New Resources on the Produce Safety Clearinghouse

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NECAFS is pleased to announce the release of multiple resources on produce safety in hydroponic and aquaponic operations. These guides summarize traditional good agricultural practices (GAPs) along with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule (FSMA PSR) and demonstrate how to apply them in hydroponic and aquaponic operations. These resources build upon and expand previous work in this area, providing engaging examples and links to many external resources.

The new resources include a [new introductory guide](#) to produce safety in hydroponics and aquaponics (also available as a [PDF factsheet](#)) and the first [grower case study](#) of a planned series that illustrates how one hydroponic farm is implementing produce safety practices in their operation.

## NCR FSMA Meetings

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The [Listening Session/ Webinar](#) will be held in Thursday, May 16, at 2:00, Central time. Educators from NECAFS (the North East Center to Advance Food Safety) will be sharing their Decision Support Tool.

Update from last month's meeting: Betty Feng, Autumn Stoll, and Pei Liu presented on their FSOP awards. You can [watch the recording](#) of the meeting in the NCR Box Folder. If you can't access Box, please let us know, and we'll send the recording another way.

The [state inspectors/regulators](#) will meet next on Friday, May 3, at 9am, Central time.

The meeting for [data/inventory/outreach staff](#) will be Friday, June 21, at 9am, Central time.

The meeting for [program managers](#) will be Tuesday, May 14, at 10am, Central time.

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

## PSA Courses

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Kansas/Missouri: May 7 & 8 (remote)

Ohio: May 15 (in-person)

The Online delivery course is offered most months.

Check out the [calendar](#) of PSA courses offered nationally.

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

## Upcoming FSPCA Courses

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Illinois: PC Human Food: May 13; June 5; July 17; Aug. 14

FSVP: June 13

Iowa: PC Human Food: June 18

PC Animal Food: May 20

Ohio: PC Human Food: May 22

Wisconsin: PC Human Food: May 16

Online: PC Human Food: May 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 31; June 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, and 28; July 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 23, 29, and 30; Aug. 5, 6, 12, 15, 20, 21, 26, and 28  
PC Human Food (Spanish): June 5; July 23

PC Animal Food: May 1, 2, 6, 8, 20, 21, and 24;

June 3, 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, and 25; July 2, 8, 9, 10, 16, 22, and 30;

Aug. 5, 7, 13, 19, 27, and 28

FSVP: May 2, 3, 9, 13, 16, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, and 30; June 5, 12, 13, 18, 26, 27;

July 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 23, 29, and 31; Aug. 1, 5, 6, 12, 14, 16, 22, and 26

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



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Thank you for your continued involvement with the NCR FSMA!

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