



The transition from the FDA-funded Center to the USDA-funded Center occurred from October 2018 to February 2019 through a series of weekly meetings between the two PI's as they established a new co-lead approach under the project. This dual leadership approach has allowed the leadership team to have more direct interaction and collaboration with stakeholders across the region and country.

The NCR FSMA Center serves as a communication and networking portal for relaying key information on food safety related to the various Food Safety Modernization Act Rules within the region. The Center engages with a wide range of stakeholders including: educators, regulators, inspectors, produce growers, small food processors, and staff from USDA, FDA, Produce Safety Alliance, Produce Safety Network, Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance, Sprout Safety Alliance, and National Association for State Departments of Agriculture. NCR FSMA also coordinates with the Lead Regional Coordination Center to oversee the alternate curriculum development and write success stories.

The NCR FSMA Center has six objectives.

Objective 1: Expand the successfully established produce safety network within the NCR

The NCR FSMA Center has successfully expanded its produce safety network.

- A 24 member advisory board was established and began meeting quarterly in September in 2019. The communication survey, taken in January 2019, highlighted the different priorities between individuals whose jobs are fully dedicated to implementing and supporting the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and those for whom this is just one part of their job. The Center must be very mindful that it has two very different types of audiences.
- The Center has increased the number of contacts that receive our newsletter from 128 people to 191 people.
- The NCR FSMA Center held its first annual conference and began planning for its second conference. The first annual conference was held in Indianapolis, Indiana. This 1.5-day event was held June 10 and 11 at the Crowne Plaza Indianapolis Airport hotel and included an optional half-day tour of the Purdue University student farm. Seventy people attended the conference. The NCR FSMA Center administered a post-conference survey at the conclusion. Overall feedback from the conference was positive with the majority of participants finding value in the presentations.

Objective 2: Develop and implement a communication system

The NCR FSMA Center uses a variety of platforms and methods to facilitate information sharing across the NCR produce safety network.

- The Center offers listening sessions for educators and regulators on a monthly basis. The Center publishes a monthly newsletter.
- In addition, the NCRFSMA.org website was updated to meet the needs of the new Center objectives. Over the past six months, 994 people have visited the site for a total of 1693 visits.

Objective 3: Support for Food Safety Outreach Program Awards

The NCR FSMA Center provides support to each of the FSOP grantees as well as those teams applying for funding. The FSOP Liaison is tasked with developing a communication plan with FSOP awardees to help them integrate into the NCR Center network, identify materials that will need Alternate Curriculum or Add-on review, support them in the review process, and help distribute developed materials and project findings.

- The Center promoted the 2019 RFA through the website, Facebook, and newsletters.
- The Center provided seven letters of support for projects seeking funding.

Objective 4: Review of FSMA add-on materials and alternate curricula

The NCR FSMA Center, under Dr. Shaw, is to develop procedures and rubric to review any alternate curriculum. The review was to be based on guidance materials released by FDA, which were delayed in Congress.

- Currently a potential final draft of the rubric and procedure for review are with FDA officials (as of July 2019). On the ncrfsma.org website, a sketching of this review process is provided for all stakeholders along with forms needed for the submission process.
- The intake forms are currently being approved by the FDA with an anticipated final release date of October 2019.

Objective 5: Professional development for a cadre of regional FSMA trainers

The first step was to develop a specific page to support educators (<https://www.ncrfsma.org/educators>) on the ncrfsma.org website.

- A list of needed professional development was created during a brainstorming session at the NCR FSMA first annual conference.
- The NCR FSMA Peer Mentorship program officially began in June of 2019. The goal of this program is to help new and current FSMA educators gain knowledge or a skill from their peers by meeting virtually and in-person with a mentor.
- The Educator Sharing Program was first introduced with the NCR FSMA FDA Center and has been running for the past two years. Twelve travel stipends are available each year to lead trainers working with a public or regional-based Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training, Preventive Controls Human Food Training, or other food safety certified program training.
- In preparation for fall/winter 2018/2019 PSA classes, a meeting was held for educators and regulators to discuss the intricacies of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and build partnerships across the region. Nineteen participants attended the meeting in Detroit and another forty-six attended remotely via Zoom. Another meeting will be held this October.
- The PSA Grower Training Knowledge Assessment is a survey used to determine the effectiveness of educators in leading the PSA course. Pre- and Post-test scores are compared for participants in the course. The results for the 2018-2019 PSA Grower Training will be released in September 2019.

Objective 6: Technical assistance to growers, processors, and vendors in the NCR

The Center is developing the infrastructure to support technical assistance requirements through a cadre of experienced FSMA Trainers (Objective 5) and a NCR-specific FSMA technical assistance campaign.