

# 2023 NCR FSMA Annual Impact Report

The North Central Region Center for FSMA Training, Extension, and Technical Assistance (NCR FSMA) formed in 2016. The purpose of the center is to equip produce safety educators, professionals, and regulators from 12 midwestern states to help small-scale farmers and food processors understand and comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

In 2023, the NCR FSMA used six evaluation methods to measure its impacts. This report shares highlights of evaluation results of the NCR FSMA in 2023.

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February 2024



**North Central Region**  
Center for FSMA Training, Extension  
and Technical Assistance

## NCR FSMA by the numbers:

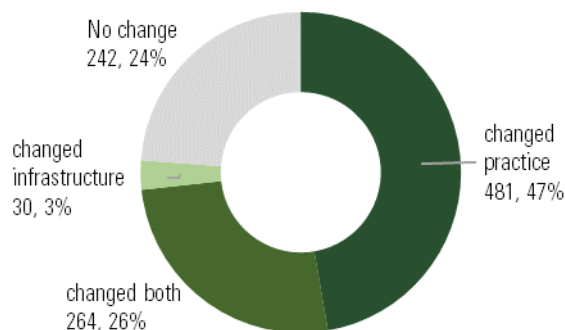
**31** people on average attended monthly listening sessions

**51** people attended the 2023 NCR FSMA Annual Conference in Eau Claire, WI

**65%** of growers who participated in an On-Farm Readiness Review improved food safety practices as a result.

**99%** of participants in the PSA grower training in the NCR indicated the training was well organized.

**76%** of growers who responded to the follow-up survey in the last six years made a change to food safety practice, infrastructure, or equipment since the training.



## Serving special populations:

NCR FSMA partners' awareness of the importance of reaching out to underserved populations and how to do that has increased by participating in the Center.

- The discussion about underserved communities during the 2023 annual meeting was the highest rated session of the conference.

*"I really enjoyed discussion of tribal representation and sovereignty."*

*~Annual meeting attendee*

- Five attendees indicated they plan to pursue more focused outreach to underserved communities in their state as a result of attending the annual meeting.
- Six people who attended the fall professional development indicated they intended to increase or improve outreach to diverse farmers as a result.

## NCR FSMA impact on networks

**81%** of annual meeting attendees agreed or strongly agreed they felt closer to other NCR FSMA partners because of attending the meeting.

**88%** of Fall Professional Development attendees agreed or strongly agreed the relationships they built during the event would improve their work.

*"I just appreciate building those connections with other people. If I have questions, or if I have an interesting technical situation [...] knowing who to contact or who may have experience with different types of situations [has been beneficial]."*

*~ Food Safety Professional, referring to the impact of the NCR FSMA network*



Attendees at the 2023 NCR FSMA annual meeting.

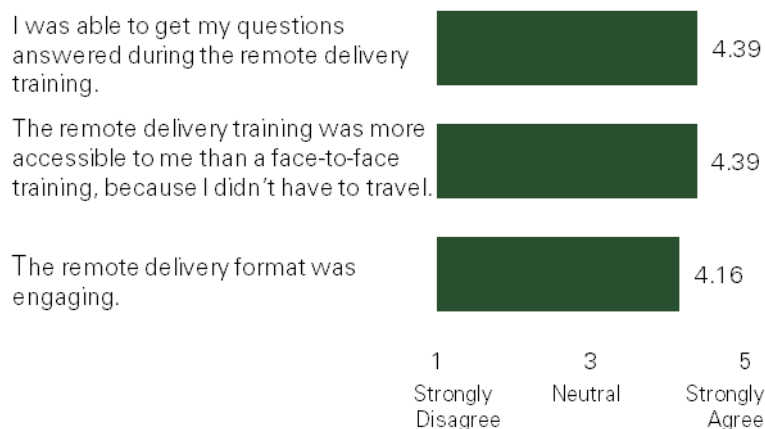
## Remote delivery PSA grower trainings help NCR FSMA partners reach growers

**109** remote delivery trainings have been held in the North Central Region, reaching **1,407** participants. (PSA Training Report–December 2023)

**84%** of follow-up survey respondents who participated in a remote delivery training made a change to on-farm food safety practice since attending the training, similar to those who participated in face-to-face trainings (75%).

*"I have taken the PSA grower training twice in the past six years to brush up on the rules/changes. The first one was taken at a facility and the second one I took remotely. I preferred the remote one; it was more convenient to attend. I didn't have to worry about driving the distance and the weather."*

*~PSA grower training participant*



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## Recommendations for 2024:

- Include structured networking in future events, such as small group activities or assigning people to eat at tables with others from different states or who have different roles from themselves. This can help those who are new integrate into the network.
- Continue to offer the fall professional development because respondents find it useful.
- Provide opportunities for food safety professionals to learn more about the realities of operating produce farms in the Midwest.
- Consider how the networking opportunities of the NCR FSMA might expand to include new audiences, such as farmers, Department of Health inspectors who inspect food establishments, organic inspectors, and GAP inspectors.
- Consider offering a brief orientation to new partners regarding what the NCR FSMA is and how it differs from the USDA NIFA.