

NCR FSMA Annual Conference Speakers
March 1 and 3, 2022
Partial list, more to be added soon

Byron Beerbower



Currently Byron is working with the FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs Produce Safety Network. He has been with the FDA for six years now. Prior to working for FDA he worked for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Food and Dairy Division starting in 1987 as a field food scientist doing inspection work on retail and manufactured foods. He then worked as policy and program coordinator before managing the Division's licensing section. He then took the opportunity to become the Compliance Manager for the division and also was the Food Safety Planning and Response Manager. He was asked by the past MDARD director to investigate and develop Michigan's produce safety program to assure that MDARD would be prepared for and able to respond to the new produce safety rule and cooperative agreement opportunities.

Stephanie Brown



Stephanie Brown is a Food Safety Specialist at Oregon State University's Food Innovation Center in Portland, OR. As a member of the Kovacevic Food Safety Outreach and Research Program, Stephanie works on projects related to the diverse research interests of the lab including pathogen characterization through basic molecular methods and next generation sequencing techniques, as well as exploring topics such as antimicrobial resistance, stress response, and pathogen survival. Stephanie also serves as the coordinator for the Western Regional Center to Enhance Food Safety. As coordinator, she facilitates connections amongst the PIs, partners, and stakeholders and works to keep the WRCEFS community informed and equipped with resources related to FSMA and FSMA-training opportunities.

Byron Chaves



Dr. Byron Chaves is an assistant professor and food safety specialist in the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His extension program focuses on providing training and technical assistance to small and very small food facilities to comply with local, state, and federal regulations. He is the USDA-FSIS HACCP Coordinator for Nebraska, and the Nebraska Lead for the North Central Region FSMA Center. Dr. Chaves has been the recipient of three USDA-NIFA grants focusing developing capacity for implementation of the FSMA Preventive Controls for Human Foods rule in Nebraska and in US insular areas. He has conducted environmental monitoring studies in food facilities in Nebraska and provided technical advice to comply with HACCP, cGMP, and FSMA regulations. His research focuses on characterizing microbial behavior in food and developing, evaluating, and optimizing antimicrobial interventions to enhance food safety.

Shannon Coleman



Shannon Coleman currently serves as an Assistant Professor and State Extension Specialist in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition at Iowa State University. Coleman's Extension and Outreach work includes developing and disseminating food safety curricula and resources for emerging, very small, and small food manufacturers in Iowa. Using various evaluation theories, her research evaluates food manufacturers' attitudes, intentions, and behaviors towards following food safety practices. In addition, Coleman has expanded her outreach and research to fill gaps in improving food safety and the local food system from farm to table, including developing curriculum and resources for youth, adults, and gardeners.

Jennifer A. Dougherty



Jennifer is the GAPS Team Lead for the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Specialty Crops Inspection Division, Audit Services Branch. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Delaware Valley College, Master of Science degree in Food Safety from Michigan State University, and is an American Society for Quality Certified Quality Auditor. Jen started her career at USDA in the Philadelphia Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection office in 2004, was promoted in 2007 to headquarters as a Standardization Specialist, in 2008 became a Standardization and Training Specialist, and has been working in Audit Services Branch since 2010.

Diane Ducharme, Ph.D.



Team Lead (Acting), Produce Safety Network, FDA CFSAN

Dr. Ducharme joined the FDA-Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), Division of Produce (DPS), Fresh Produce Branch (FPB) within the Produce Safety Network (PSN) in early 2017 as a Consumer Safety Officer. In her role, Diane serves as a national technical expert supporting fresh produce policy development, regulatory guidelines, advisory options, position papers, and compliance strategies for the FDA's Produce Safety Rule. Dr. Ducharme has provided subject matter expertise to advise internal and external stakeholders on procedures, outreach, training, and enforcement to foster industry compliance with the new federal regulations (FSMA) governing the produce industry. Diane gains her integrated expertise from a B.S. from UNC in environmental science/biology, M.S. from Clemson University in plant pathology, and Ph.D. from NCSU in horticultural and food science.

Bob Ehart



NASDA Senior Policy & Science Advisor

Bob Ehart is the Senior Policy & Science Advisor at NASDA and the principal investigator for two cooperative agreements with FDA, which assist FDA and the states to implement the FSMA produce safety and the animal food preventive controls rules. Ehart joined NASDA in 2003, became director of public policy in 2009 and in 2012 moved into a position as a senior advisor so he could focus on food safety issues. Bob developed the on-farm readiness review program and the states' role in the implementation of FSMA. He has championed the need for and value of uniform and consistent inspection and enforcement programs across the nation.

In the past, Ehart founded an environmental monitoring firm focused on identifying and mitigating on-farm risk, was a technical and subsequently an appointed agricultural official with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and previous to those roles he was an extension education specialist at North Dakota State University. He has worked in government, academia, and industry.

Betty Feng



After earning master's and doctoral degrees in Food Science from the University of California, Davis, Dr. Betty Feng joined Purdue University in 2018 as an Assistant Professor of Food Safety. Betty's research program uses a sociological approach to explore cultural, social, and environmental factors that affect food safety behaviors. Her research identifies barriers to understanding food safety risks in consumer kitchens, develops strategies that empower food handlers to make science-based decisions, and increases food safety knowledge and best-practice compliance of both consumers and food handlers.

Laurie George



Laurie George is the PSA Midwest Regional Extension Associate. Since 2011, Laurie has been working with small and commercial horticultural farms concentrating on food safety issues, sustainable local food production, advancement of local food systems and initiatives, and marketing of locally grown produce into commerce. Laurie joined the Produce Safety Alliance team in May of 2021 and has been working with state-wide regulators and Extension staff throughout the Midwest to discuss food safety issues and concerns. Her educational training was in Plant, Soils, and Agricultural Sciences from Southern Illinois University

where she received her Ph.D.

Craig Hedberg

Craig Hedberg is an Epidemiologist and Professor in the Division of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of Minnesota, School of Public Health (SPH). He serves as the Co-Director for the MN Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence.

Dr. Hedberg promotes public health surveillance as a prerequisite for effective food control. Prior to joining the SPH faculty in 1999, Dr. Hedberg had 15 years of applied experience conducting surveillance for foodborne, vectorborne, and zoonotic diseases at the Minnesota Department of Health where he developed several innovative approaches to improving foodborne illness surveillance and outbreak investigation.

His most important contributions have been to advance methods for collaboration between public health and regulatory agencies, academic researchers and industry to improve foodborne illness surveillance and outbreak investigations. Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of investigations enhances response activities. Better investigations produce more effective prevention measures.

Sanja Ilic



Dr. Sanja Ilic is an Associate Professor in Human Nutrition, Department of Human Sciences and a Food Safety State Specialist. The focus of her research interest is investigating and promoting food safety, reduction and prevention of food safety risks among food handlers and consumers. Of special interest is microbial safety of fresh fruits and vegetables including contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella* spp., STEC, etc. Dr. Ilic investigates transmission and dissemination routes, and interventions to prevent and reduce risks of contamination of fresh produce and other foods within the food systems approach in hydroponic fresh fruits and vegetables production. Dr. Ilic investigates food safety behaviors with the goal of determining the barriers to food safety interventions. Her research provides novel food safety interventions to control and eliminate foodborne pathogens and innovative approaches of knowledge transfer targeting specific populations with an overall goal of improving health and wellness. Dr. Ilic studies food safety behaviors in produce production chain. She has multiple externally funded hydroponic food safety projects. The findings of her study are directly applicable to hydroponic production and she has developed Good Agricultural Guide for Hydroponic Producers where her study findings together with other research evidence is translated to best practices for growing safe crops. Dr. Ilic had delivered multiple food safety courses and lectures to hydroponic community.

Jovana Kovacevic



(Name pronunciation: Yo-va-nah KovaCH-eviCH

<https://www.howtopronounce.com/kovacevic/30616508>)

Dr. Jovana Kovacevic is an Assistant Professor and Food Safety Extension Specialist at the Oregon State University's Food Innovation Center (FIC) in Portland. In her current role, Dr. Kovacevic directs the food safety program at the FIC and the USDA-funded Western Regional Center to Enhance Food Safety. Her research uses molecular methods and whole genome sequencing to trace, better understand and prevent contamination events in the food chain, with particular focus on *Listeria monocytogenes*. Through her work with the Western Regional Center, she supports the Western U.S. region in Food Safety Modernization Act-related food safety training, education and outreach activities.

Rachael Kozolup, M.S.



Consumer Safety Officer, Policy Team, FDA CFSAN

Ms. Kozolup joined the FDA-Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), Division of Produce (DPS), Fresh Produce Branch (FPB) in 2015 as a Staff Fellow. In her current role, Rachael serves as a Consumer Safety Officer contributing to policy development and guidance related to the safety of fresh produce, with an emphasis in worker health and hygiene. Rachael also serves as a project manager where she leads several initiatives to advance research related to produce safety. Prior to joining the FDA, she worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to promote trade through capacity building and technical assistance programs in food safety to foreign governments and private industries. She graduated from the University of Maryland with a B.S. in anthropology, and earned her M.S. in Agriculture and Life Sciences from Virginia Tech.

Billy Mitchell



Billy Mitchell is the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) training coordinator at the National Farmers Union and works closely with the Local Food Safety Collaborative, an FDA-funded initiative to provide training, education, and technical assistance to local food producers. A former farmer and farm manager, Mitchell now travels around the country (by car, by plane, and by Zoom) working alongside producers to identify creative and cost-effective solutions that make food safety practical for small and medium size operations. The NCR monthly calls are a highlight of his work, it's always so energizing to get to see and interact with such a caring, committed, and fun group of people.

Elizabeth Newbold



Elizabeth Newbold is the Assistant Director for the Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety (NECAFS) at the University of Vermont Extension. Her work focuses on coordination and facilitation of the Northeast regional network to support the consensus-based work articulated by the NECAFS network tailored to meet the needs of the region's growers and processors.

Joe Reardon



NASDA Director Food Safety Programs

Joe brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in both food, and feed safety and defense at the State and federal levels. Joe previously served as the Assistant Commissioner for Consumer Protection for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. He oversaw the divisions responsible for food safety, agricultural emergency response, animal health and regulation of the structural pest control industry, pesticide use and various weighing and measuring devices. Prior to that, he served as Senior Advisor for Federal-State Relations and Director for the Division of Federal-State Relations in the Office of Regulatory Affairs of FDA from 2009 through 2012. In these roles, he worked collaboratively with Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial partners to enhance the public health infrastructure and increase the safety of food and feed. Joe received his degree in Food Science from North Carolina State University. In his role at NASDA he works with all 50 Commissioners, Directors, and Secretaries of Agriculture on food safety-related issues.

Katelynn Stull



Katelynn received her B.S. in microbiology in 2016 and her M.S. in food science in 2018 from Kansas State University. While in her master's program, she focused on food microbiology and produce safety. She is currently the Extension Program Specialist for the Southern Center for FSMA training and Lead Regional Coordination Center at the University of Florida. In this role, she coordinates trainings and events and maintains communication with stakeholders.

Jason Wan, Ph.D.



Interim Director, Institute for Food Safety and Health (IFSH) Interim Executive Director, Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) Professor, Department of Food Science and Nutrition, Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT)

Dr. Jason Wan is the Interim Director for Institute for Food Safety and Health (IFSH), and Professor of Food Science at Illinois Institute of Technology. Jason also serves as the Interim Executive Director for the Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA), as well as a member of a number of committees of the Alliance, including Editorial, Implementation, and International. Jason is a Trainer-of-Trainer for FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food, and for Foreign Supplier Verification Programs Lead Instructors courses. Prior to joining IFSH in July 2009, Jason was a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne (1992-1995), and a Senior Research Scientist and a

Platform Manager at the Division of Food and Nutritional Sciences, Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australia (1995-2009). Jason's scientific expertise includes emerging food processing technologies (high pressure processing, pulsed electric field, cool plasma, ultrasound, pulsed light and microwave) for food safety applications, antimicrobials, molecular microbiology, and dairy processing.

Dr. Jodi Williams



Dr. Jodi Williams is a National Program Leader in Food Safety with the US Department of Agriculture in the National Institute of Food and Agriculture providing leadership to the Food Safety Outreach Program and Small Business Innovation Research Food Science and Nutrition Program. Dr. Williams comes to NIFA from the USDA's U.S. Codex Office (USCO) where she served as the Deputy Manager for U.S. Codex. Prior to working with USCO, Dr. Williams was the Senior Advisor for Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health in USDA's Office of the Chief Scientist where she advised the Under Secretary/Chief Scientist on policy development and operational planning pertaining to food safety, nutrition, and human health programs and activities. Dr. Williams provides leadership for a portfolio of competitive and non-competitive grant programs in Food Science and Food Safety as a National Program Leader. Jodi is actively involved in developing Request for Applications and leading panels to select research, education, and extension projects in the Food Science and Nutrition priority within the Small Business Innovation Research Competitive Grant Program and the Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program. In addition to her program leadership responsibilities within the Department, Dr. Williams was also actively engaged in improving the quality and efficiency of competitive grants programs by interacting and engaging with professional organizations in Food Science and Agriculture including the Institute of Food Technologists and the International Association for Food Protection where she presents programmatic information and provides agency updates. Dr. Williams has worked diligently to build a significant network within the food science and food safety academic and industry community to ensure her programs remain relevant and timely.

Dr. Williams has been with the US Department of Agriculture for over 25 years. She received her PhD and MS from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Food Science and Technology with a Food Chemistry focus and her BS from Delaware State University in Chemistry. She lives and works in Shrewsbury, PA.