

The North Central Region Center (NCR Center) for Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Training, Extension, and Technical Assistance serves as a communication and networking portal within the region for relaying key information on food safety, related to the various Food Safety Modernization Act Rules. With food safety educational leads in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin and over 50 produce industry partners, the NCR Center has connected growers, educators, processors, and government regulators together in extension, research, technical assistance, and outreach efforts. With the development of a produce safety network for the NCR, the collaboration amongst members has been documented by awarded federal and state grants and research. Additionally, the NCR Center has increased the capacity of food safety educators and it has been reported that five new positions have been created and three facilities have been upgraded by leveraging of FDA funds. With the release of the FSMA in 2016, the NCR Center conducted a needs assessment for produce growers and processors in the NCR and then worked in small groups to develop 18 resources (fact sheets, flip charts, envelopes, etc.) to meet those needs. There have also been 3 peer review papers published on the work from this center, four success stories and two graduate students supported. To date over 2,300 copies of these developed resources have been distributed by Extension educators, state regulators, and non-profit organizations and are all available on our website (ncrfsma.org) and through a national Clearinghouse organized by the North East Center. The NCR Center has offered listening sessions and webinars for educators and regulators on a monthly basis to ensure consistency of information was shared to the produce industry. Additionally, an annual educational session (named NB) has offered an opportunity for professional development for partners. Through the NCR Center, a train the trainer program led to 43 lead trainers and 258 trainers of Produce Safety Alliance Grower training within the NCR and there have been 183 Produce Safety Alliance Growers Courses taught and 8 train the trainer courses hosted within the NCR between September 2016 and December 2018.