

National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Program

To help implement the FSMA rules for Produce Safety and Preventive Controls for Human Food, FDA and USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) are facilitating multiple *outreach efforts* focusing on partnerships involving government (state, local, tribal, and territorial), industry, and academia. These partnerships will be key to developing and delivering training to help the producers and processors understand and comply with the FSMA rules.

FDA's outreach efforts comprise the following key components:

- 1) Creating public/private Alliances;
- 2) Creating a National Coordination Center (NCC) and Regional Centers (RCs); and
- 3) Funding training programs through Cooperative Agreements and grants.

Public/Private Alliances

FDA has overseen the creation of three major Alliances – the Produce Safety Alliance, the Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance, and the Sprout Safety Alliance - comprising representatives from FDA, USDA, state regulatory agencies, industry, and academia.

The ***Produce Safety Alliance*** (PSA), which represents a partnership between FDA, USDA, and Cornell University, offers a Grower Training course for members of both the domestic and foreign produce industry, including small farmers. The PSA also offers a Train-the-Trainer (TTT) course, which prepares trainers to deliver the Grower Training course to produce growers.

The ***Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance*** (FSPCA) features a standardized training program, along with a technical information network, aimed at helping the food industry – including mixed-type facilities on farms – comply with the Preventive Controls rules for human and animal food. Like the PSA, the FSPCA offers TTT courses for individuals who deliver training to both human food and animal food facilities. In addition, the FSPCA offers a training module on the FSVP rule for processors who import foods, along with an FSVP course for non-processor importers. Training courses on Intentional Adulteration are also being handled by FSPCA.

The ***Sprout Safety Alliance*** (SSA) serves as a network hub – and primary resource – for the sprout industry. The SSA offers training on best practices related to the safe production of sprouts, and the relevant facets of the Produce Safety rule. Like the other Alliances, the SSA also offers a TTT course for individuals interested in delivering sprout safety training to farms.

Both the FSPCA and SSA are coordinated by the Institute for Food Safety and Health at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

National Coordination Center and Regional Centers

Through the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Program – mandated by FSMA – FDA and NIFA have created a collaborative partnership focusing on providing produce safety and preventive controls training, education, and assistance to address the needs of owners and operators of small and medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers affected by the FSMA rules. This program will be carried out through four RCs across the U.S., and the NCC that will foster collaboration and efficiency among the four RCs.

FDA grants were issued in 2015 and 2016 to establish the following RCs:

- University of Vermont (Northeast);
- University of Florida (Southern);
- Iowa State University (North Central);
- Oregon State University (Western)

Through collaboration with non-governmental and community-based organizations, cooperative extensions, food hubs, and local farm cooperatives, the RCs are developing training curricula and collaborating with partner universities and farm related organizations to meet the specific needs of the target audiences within the particular regions.

The ***International Food Protection Training Institute*** (IFPTI) has been designated as the NCC. In its role as the NCC, IFPTI is facilitating communication and collaboration among the RCs, the Alliances, cooperative agreement holders, and other stakeholders about the development and delivery of regional- or audience-specific produce safety and preventive controls training.

One of the NCC's key activities is the management of the Training Advisory Council (TAC). The TAC provides a forum to share information, provide recommendations, and reach stakeholders about training and technical assistance resources and strategies to address the needs of the target audience identified above affected by the FSMA rules. The TAC advises the NCC, RCs, FDA, NIFA, and other key stakeholders on delivering existing training and developing and delivering new training to meet the needs of the audiences identified above.

Cooperative Agreements

Along with the traditional curriculum and training materials developed and offered by these three Alliances, FDA recognizes that the use of alternate materials may be more appropriate for certain groups.

As a result, Cooperative Agreements have been awarded to develop and disseminate training for specific audiences – namely, local food producers and tribes – that may face unique circumstances and challenges in implementing the new FSMA rules.

The **National Farmers Union** (NFU), which represents small and mid-sized businesses involved in local food production – including sustainable and organic farming – has been awarded a Cooperative Agreement under the Local Food Producer Outreach, Education, and Training to Enhance Food Safety and FSMA Compliance program. NFU will use the funding to sponsor low cost PSA grower training and the FSPCA training course as well as develop and deliver training curricula and conduct outreach activities aimed at its target audiences.

The **University of Arkansas at Fayetteville**, which represents producers, manufacturers, and processors within tribes, has also been awarded a Cooperative Agreement through the Native American Tribes Outreach, Education, and Training to Enhance Food Safety and FSMA Compliance program. The University through its Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative Program will use the funding to deliver the PSA grower training courses and the FSPCA Preventive Controls training courses and develop and disseminate training curricula to tribal communities.

The **National Association of State Departments of Agriculture** (NASDA), which represents state partners, has received a five-year Cooperative Agreement specifically aimed at helping to implement the Produce Safety Rule. NASDA and FDA are developing best practices for implementing the rule, including education and outreach activities to both industry and regulatory officials.

In addition, FDA has awarded Cooperative Agreement funding to help 42 states implement the Produce Safety Rule. This funding will allow these states to create and implement a produce safety system, and provide education, outreach, and assistance to farming operations covered by the rule.

FSMA Collaborative Training Forum

The informal ***FSMA Collaborative Training Forum*** had its initial meeting in early 2017. The Forum, which is co-chaired by FDA and USDA, provides an opportunity for dialogue and information-sharing among the participants, which include the Alliances, the National Coordination Center and Regional Centers, JIFSAN, NASDA, the Local Food Collaborative and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative. One of the key outcomes of the Forum will be eliminating duplicative efforts and maximizing the efficient use of resources.

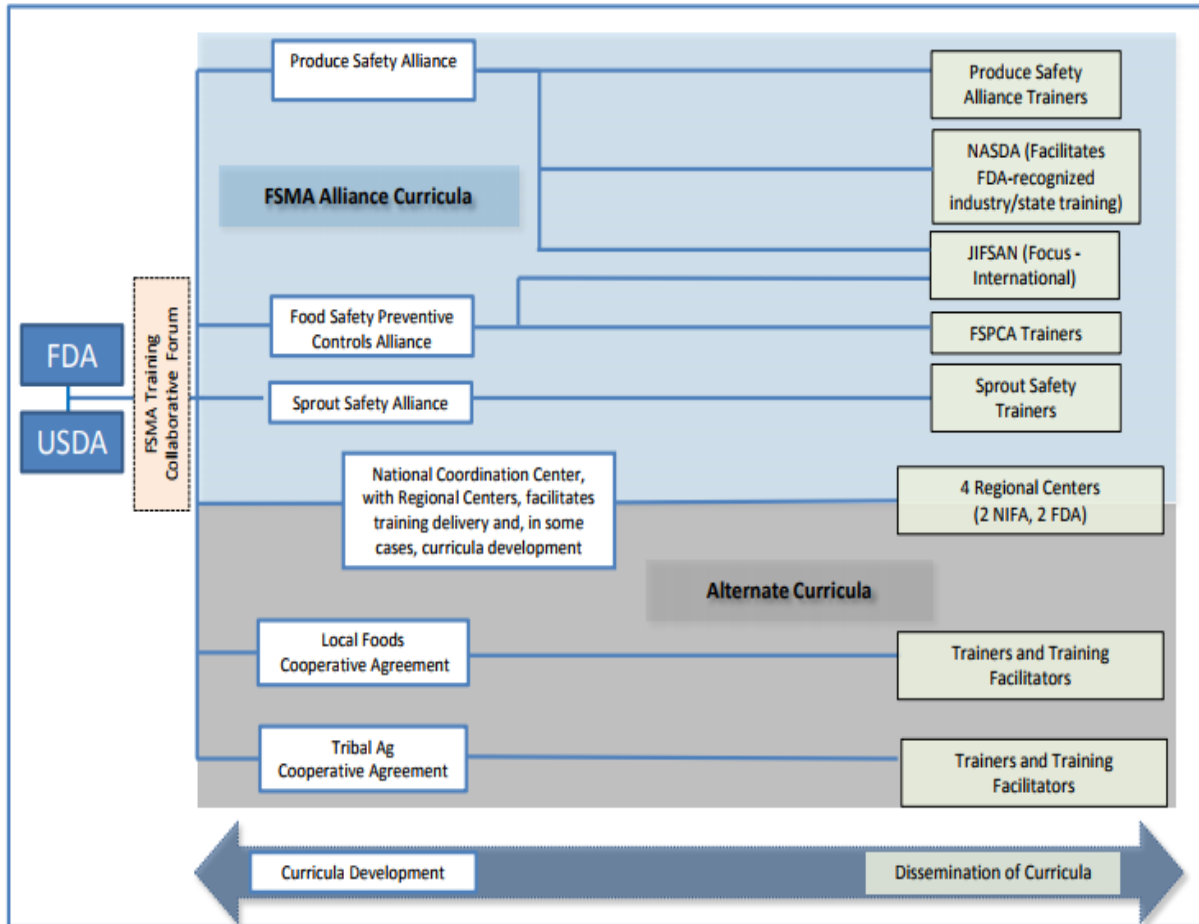
Conclusion

Through a myriad of efforts, FDA is ensuring that all stakeholders – no matter their size, nature, or location - both understand the new FSMA requirements and have access to the tools and resources needed to implement the rules. The agency has

created the infographic below which depicts the key players and their primary roles. Key organizations that oversee the development of FSMA training curricula and materials include the Alliances, the NCC and RCs, the Local Food Collaborative and the Tribal Cooperative Agreement (NFU and the University of Arkansas). Central to the delivery and dissemination of training are the Lead Trainers (through the Alliances, RCs, Cooperative Agreement recipients, and other key organizations such as NASDA and JIFSAN).

FSMA Framework for Industry Curriculum Development and Dissemination

October 2015



This is not an all-inclusive list of entities that will be developing training curricula and delivery for domestic and foreign food businesses.