

Summary Report

Breakout Group Discussions

Project Directors Meeting

USDA NIFA Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP)

Covering the 2022 and 2023 Meetings

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Summary

This report summarizes the results of two successive years of breakout group discussions at the annual national meeting of project directors involved in the Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP).

The discussions highlighted recurring themes that are summarized here with more detail provided in the tables below.

- **What Happened?** *Breakout group participants were asked to highlight some successes and to describe things that would not have happened without FSOP support.* Recurring themes in response to these prompts included:
 - Educational Resource Development and Learning Events
 - Market Access
 - Next Generation of Education: Hands-On & Peer-to-Peer Innovation
 - Integration, Coordination and Collaboration
 - Travel Support, Student Access & Reach
 - Leveraged Funding
 - Education of the Next Generation of Food Safety Professionals
 - Food Safety Community - Relationships and Partnerships
 - Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse – One Stop Shop
- **What Else Could Happen?** *Breakout group participants were asked what they would do with more funding and more time and what audiences would benefit most from their work and how distribution could be supported.* Recurring themes in response to these prompts included:
 - Improve Needs Assessment
 - Improve Evaluation
 - Improve Accessibility through Design and Translation
 - Additional Partners in Additional States
 - Expand Outreach, including Small and Medium Scale Producers Service Provider Network
 - Expand Hands-On & Experiential Learning
 - Support Financial Equity in Food Safety Education
 - Improve and Better Leverage Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse
 - Explore Central Communication
 - Expand Access through Translation and Tailoring

The project directors are clearly enthusiastic about the FSOP and see direct value among the stakeholders served, but also among their own networks. The national meeting is an important element of the work since it enables networking and sharing across projects and has led to expanded work under separate funding in some cases.

Background

The FSMA Lead Regional Coordination Center (LRCC) has hosted a national meeting for the past two years to facilitate sharing and learning among project directors of projects funded by the USDA NIFA Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP). FSOP projects cover a broad range of topics, goals, objectives, and audiences using a variety of methods among different lead organizations.

These meetings are meant to foster sharing among the projects of approaches, findings, outputs, and lessons learned.

In addition to short formal presentations about each project, there are opportunities for networking and social connection during breaks. Additionally, breakout group discussions have been facilitated with prompts to promote sharing and consolidation of learning. This report is meant to provide a summary of these discussions over the past two years (May 25, 2022 and May 31, 2023).

Approach

The attendees at each meeting were divided into four groups and a facilitator was assigned to each group. The breakout group prompts were generally consistent between both years as follows. The one change is the underlined portion of prompt #4 which was added in 2023 based on evaluation feedback from 2022.

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*
2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*
3. If you could add another year of funding and/or add a person (discipline / skill) to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*
4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work and what would help distribute it better? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*

Results

The breakout group notes from each session are provided as full text in the appendix and are summarized below.

Prompt #1 - Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project.

Intent: Success story ideas and themes.

2022 Themes	2023 Themes	Recurring Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to food safety learning for resource limited audiences. • Produce market access through certifications. • Processed foods market access through learning and scaling support. • Expansion and extension of educational programs (e.g. from workshop to curriculum). • Fostering food safety cultures (“The truck is cleaner now!”) • Planning for the future with food safety lens (recordkeeping and documents). • Expanded communication among practitioners in the food safety field. • Tailoring larger, more complex educational resources to simpler, more focused options for audience. • Improved confidence among growers. • Supportive of peer-to-peer learning among farmers. • Integrating food safety training with other trainings to improve access (e.g. with worker safety and pesticide trainings). • Supporting try before you buy hands on exercises (e.g. cleaning tools.) • Easing lab access and use for water testing. • Integration of multiple projects in a more collaborative and coordinated way around shared goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity among growers about pros/cons of preharvest water treatment. • Hands-on activities around BSAAO to drive home key concepts and behavior change. • One-on-one direct technical assistance helped growers through GAP audit. • Variety of projects and other collaborations that have come from regional and national meetings. • Helping processors from idea to product to market. • Partnership development among service providers and educators. • Development of valuable resources that are shared among this group, but also among and by regulatory partners to support improved practice on the farm. • Leveraged funding and findings from FSOP for other larger and longer-term funding. • Project supported connection with a group previously not served by the food safety community. • Improved access to educational opportunities for resource limited farmers. • Supporting education of grad students and interns across state lines. • Supporting workshop participants to become trainers, themselves. • Use of materials developed under FSOP by other programs for other audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Access & Reach – funding provides direct and indirect financial support for resource limited and underserved audiences enabling participation, learning, and improved practice. Access is improved (bringing them here) as well as reach (going there) due to fiscal support. • Market Access – FSOP supports educational and technical assistance that helps producers and processors reach new markets and increase scale of operations. • Hands-On & Peer-to-Peer – FSOP provides flexibility and funding to integrate more hands-on, peer-to-peer, and experiential learning using methods and environments that foster comfort and improved knowledge and confidence gain. • Educational Resources and Events – FSOP provides a framework for tailored education informed by the learners leading to improved learning events and educational resources. • Integration, Coordination and Collaboration – FSOP model, including the national and regional meetings fosters sharing of project plans and results which leads to improved network integration, coordination and collaboration across various organizations and multiple states and regions. • Leveraged Funding – FSOP projects lead to new knowledge, new relationships, new collaborations leading to larger and longer-term funding.

Prompt #2 - What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible?

Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.

2022 Themes	2023 Themes	Recurring Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of FSMA related rules and requirements • More collaborators across the country and world. • Travel was supported for educators and service providers to those in need and for producers and processors to reach the educational events. • Funding for graduate students and interns to support next generation of food safety professionals. • Funding supports hands-in and experiential learning which is more time intense and expensive. Adapting existing resources and curricula into alternative delivery forms. Culturally appropriate development and tailoring. • Travel support for going to trainings outside of our own state. • Development of new educational resources and more innovative outputs (learning trailer) • Strength in relationship – new partnerships, collaborations that amplify the work. “Phone a friend” when in need. • Funding allowed us to hire specific skills (e.g. videographer, animator) to develop interesting and compelling outputs beyond what we’d do with our cell phones. • The Clearinghouse and the project outputs being there is a really huge win. Addition of peer-review process for resources is a welcome bonus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported incentives for participation among rural producers. • Financial support of community-based partners to be actively engaged and leading activities. • Partnership with historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) is support of students, trainings, and grower participation. • Development of an alternative curriculum. • More frequent farm visits to broaden audience and bring other educators and service providers along for exposure to produce safety topics. • Regional meetings have been critical for networking and collaboration. • This funding inspired an additional proposal which has led to the growth of produce safety team (+100%). • Combination of multiple, duplicative trainings and educational resources into a consolidate and better single resource. • This program cultivates a community around food safety. • Allows concerted effort around commodities or other shared foci across state lines. • Supports early career professionals in developing their programs, science, and craft. • Brokering trust – government support of a project that is delivered by a trusted person or group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Support – Funding enables educators to reach learners, allows learners to access and attend educational events and enables peers to reach each other for peer-to-peer learning. • Education of the Next Generation – FSOP supports integration of undergraduate, graduate and intern educational experiences to support the next generation of produce safety, extension, and community-based organization personnel. • Next Generation of Education – Novel educational approaches, new resources, new types of resources. Increased hands-on, experiential learning, peer-to-peer learning, leveraging outside expertise. • Relationships and Partnerships – The FSOP approach cultivates a community around food safety. Allows concerted effort around commodities or other shared foci across state lines. Supports connection among aligned projects and people to do more and do it better, together. • Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse – The Clearinghouse provides a platform to connect the projects and educational products with people in need. Peer-review has improved this resource, but we need to work on practitioner access and experience.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We reached farmers we would not have reached without this funding. Outreach, travel, translation services, costs of training, etc. • Reaching producers and processors not yet covered by the rules, but impacted by them. • Gateway to other USDA programs. • Cultural development – good food safety management = good farm management = sustainability. • One-on-One technical support and education is supported. • Supported producers and processors in market access and growth of businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We had flexibility to shift our project work to better meet the needs of the intended audience. • Mobile training vehicle enabled us to bring the training to the field. • Travel support enabled us to go to the processors and improve access to training. • Enabled us to hire expertise outside of the university. • Created a network of shared-use facilities which didn't exist before; they now communicate and function as a peer network outside of the project. 	
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Prompt #3 - If you could add another year of funding and/or add a person (discipline / skill) to your project, what would you do?

Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.

2022 Themes	2023 Themes	Recurring Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore more HACCP training. • More in-depth needs assessment with niche audience. • More outreach on practical practices to be used on farm (e.g. water sampling and testing.) • Translate resources into more languages. • More online modules • Hire evaluators to track behavior, attitude, and knowledge change. • Think through how to best leverage all these new tools. • More trainings. • Thinking beyond our known audiences and doing a better job knowing and reaching everyone who needs this work. • Design and deliver crisis communication materials for small farms. • Improve social media fluency and incorporation into the work. • Better explore and leverage technical literacy and help bridge gaps there. • Pay people for their time (as students.) • More \$ = more farms reached and served. • Work on better assessment of knowledge gain and adoption of practice. • Get to more states, increase number of partners. • Update the training just developed to incorporate anticipated changes to subpart E and future guidance. • Build out more hands-on demonstrations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add additional project partners. • More field trips to better engage socially disadvantaged farmers. • More demonstration sites. • More audiences. • Translation and improve accessibility. • Spend more time training and conducting outreach in a specific needed area or group. • Take what was developed and apply it with an individual or group to test it out, “break it” and improve. • Add a person to revitalize existing programs. • Institutionalize succession planning. • Improve use of social media. Funnel content and outcomes from across the country and have a promotional expert get it out. • More hands-on training. Requires more trainers, more equipment and supplies, travel. • Incorporate more social science to understand motivations, behavior change. • Expand evaluation with a longer-term plan to check in on actual changed practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Partners in Additional States – More funding would allow for more partners in more states to achieve greater reach. • Improve Needs Assessment – A longer-term project would allow for more up-front needs assessment to better inform the work. • Improve Evaluation – Longer term projects would allow for more in-depth evaluation and greater chance of capturing adoption of practice and behavior change. Also requires funding for specific skill sets. • Improve Accessibility through Design and Translation – Extend project outputs to reach other audiences not originally in project plan, but in need. • Expand Outreach – Explore additional audiences, in more states, leverage social media and specific skill sets in communication and promotion. • Hands-On & Experiential Learning – More funding and longer project terms would allow greater chance to leverage educational resources and integrate them into hands-on and experiential learning opportunities. • Financial Equity – More funding would enable greater financial support of all partners including participating producers and processors.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve continuity of personnel funding to support sustainability of trained personnel in this topic.• Work to better incorporate language and other educational access factors (literacy, low hearing, visual impairment.)		
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Prompt #4 - How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work and what would help distribute it better?

Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.

2022 Themes	2023 Themes	Recurring Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and very small processors • Share kitchens • Inspectors • Extension agents • Educators • Consumers • Buyers • Social disadvantaged participants in the food system • Should not ignore the opportunity to simply reach more of the same audience through multi-state outreach. • Service providers • Hard to reach communities • Developing resources for small, new, and beginning farms that can translate to others (larger, more established farms) • Translated resources for different audiences • Work to make resources less technical and more practical • Limited resource farmers • Producer growers • Handlers • 4-H • Water testing labs (which have their own language) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd language stakeholders • Consider a communications coordinator for the whole program with a dedicated focus. • Socioeconomically disadvantaged producers • More resource development – expand access and coverage. • Stipends to enable participation. • Small and medium sized producers • One-on-one “hand-holding” • Short webinars – themed, through-out the year with audience Q&A • Use Clearinghouse to better identify individuals and specialties. • Offer exhibits at conferences. • Variable output modalities. • Get information to audience in the way they want and how they want it. • Nutritionists • National manufacturing network • Minority farm alliances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and Medium Scale Producers – Including resource limited, hard to reach, historically underserved, new/beginning farmers. • Service Provider Network – All engaged in food safety education including extension, community-based organizations, regulatory partners, buyers, peer educators. • Community - FSOP provides community/builds relationships to support the work through meetings, research updates, etc. • Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse – The Clearinghouse provides a platform to connect the projects and educational products with people in need. Peer-review has improved this resource, but we need to work on practitioner access and experience. • Central Communication – A dedicated, central communicator for the FSOP projects would help better leverage the work across projects and beyond. • Translation and Tailoring – Further translation and tailoring of resources to reach additional audiences.

2022 Breakout Group Notes

GROUP 1 - 2022 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/25/2022

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*
 - *All of my clients are very resource limited. It is fantastic to see them wanting to follow food laws and do things right and start to make local food available.*
 - *Farmers Alba-leased 6 acres of organic produce but didn't have certification to sell the produce. They helped him get certification and sell all the produce*
 - *Client didn't have knowledge on processing and now have learned enough to increase sales and major companies so now they require Food Safety Preventive Control Human*

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*
 - *They are aware of FSMA and related food laws.*
 - *More collaborators across the world and within the united states*
 - *Monies to travel to partners and have partners visit our states*
 - *Funding for graduate students and internship (next generation)*
 - *Budget for hands-on activities and enhancements*
 - *More trainings outside of our states (travel budget)*

3. If you could add another year of funding to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*
 - *Add HACCP training.*
 - *More in-depth needs assessment with niche audience*
 - *More outreach on practical practices to be utilized on farm (water testing and water sampling)*
 - *Translate into more languages*
 - *More online modules*
 - *Evaluators to track behavior, attitude, and knowledge change*

4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*
 - *It starts with the socially disadvantaged but trickles to the community as they have healthy safe locally made food available.*
 - *Smal and very small processors (some want to grow business and others do not want to grow business)*
 - *Shared kitchens whose products go to food trucks to food manufactures*

- Inspectors: they need more trainings on basic food safety and niche topics
- Extension agents: servsafe instructors need more trainings and more information on other food safety regulations
- Consumers and buyers (indirectly)

GROUP 2 - 2022 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/25/2022

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*
 - rules to reality class; now a short course.
 - had a comment that "the truck is cleaner" after learning about cleaning and sanitizing.
 - I realized we were one of the ones right on the line of QE v covered. We will begin keeping records as if we were covered, to be sure.
 - Knowledge gain –; we're getting information to the folks who need it
 - Farm Innovation – growers are giving lots of compliments, it's so helpful going through this information; some hearing and literacy difficulties, so they're being reached through activities for the Farm Innovation trailer
 - They're also thinking about doing a hybrid innovation where they cover most of the PSA modules online, and then do some hands on, in person work
 - Level of comms and interaction we did over the last two years has exploded – the initial small group of individuals and resources has really become a large network; we've been forced out of our shells. Back then, so few people were thinking about produce safety... people with a real passion for this have been attracted into the field.

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*
 - We would not have been able to make the Farm Innovation Project trailers without this project award
 - Handouts on how to make trailers
 - Opens the eyes of people who didn't previously know about Extension and what we do and offer
 - Adapted course materials, hands-on activities
 - Strength in relationships, partnerships – partnering more intimately with underserved audiences
 - Funds allowed them to hire professional videographers who could get the footage that worked really well, as opposed to "we can use our smartphones"
 - Now able to have a peer review process for all the content created
 - The repository itself is really a huge win – I'm on it at least once a week

3. If you could add another year of funding to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*
 - we have all these new tools, what can we do with them now once COVID goes away? How do we now leverage this?
 - More trainings!
 - Because we're all remote we can go attend these meetings, bring people onto projects through virtual means.

- Having a greater awareness of what's available due to the hybrid and online nature we were forced to through COVID
 - Being able to disseminate to and gather data from a wider audience, more populations
 - COVID was beneficial for teaching us how to leverage remote training and how to make it not awful; evals show this. There are all these audiences and they don't all fit into the same buckets. There are some people who need something different – where are people actually? What do they need? What sets of tools and things are we not working on that we might need to create now that we're aware, take what we've learned and apply it – there are way more buckets and they all have different needs. Betsy
 - I would design and deliver crisis communication materials to deliver to small and small farmers
 - Social media fluency – we need more trainers and more materials, we need to train up the next generation who will come in and take the place of folks who are aging out
 - Growers also came out of their comfort zone – use of technology as an example
 - Learning about literacy and digital learning era – would purchase a digital tablet of some kind for all the farmers and load all the materials on it, equipped so it would loop and play for them when needed so they could really learn as they needed with low tech ability.
 - Pay people for their time – make arrangements to pay people to train them (pay them for their time)
4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*
- We could hit more numbers of the same groups – offering opportunities to replicate
 - Service providers, graduates, incubator programs
 - Reaching new communities
 - Hard to reach communities

GROUP 3 - 2022 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/25/2022

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*
 - Created a class "Rules to reality" which made tough subjects basic, easy to understand in 10mins. What do you need to do to meet the rule? Show through videos how farmers were meeting the rule on their farm. Postharvest Handling was where they saw the most knowledge gain. It is rewarding to see that people who went through the training multiple times now feel confident to implement the methods on the farm. Seeing the peer-to-peer learning was most beneficial.
 - Had a 30min podcast with one of the farmers who went through the on-farm readiness review, he explained what it was like. It showed the listeners that an on-farm readiness review is not anything to be intimidated by. It helped other farmers be encouraged to discuss their perspectives and needs when it comes to on-farm readiness.
 - Incorporating food safety education into something that is already happening. Teaching about heat stress and pesticide management. Helping the underserved by introducing the information in other existing workshops and trainings is effective.
 - On-farm readiness review of a farm that sources produce from other farms. They take the food, process it and pack it, but know nothing about the production practices of the food acquired. They built an aggregator checklist for the growers and aggregators to be able to share their food safety practices. This allows small scale growers be involved in contracting with larger aggregators. It impacted the food economy and increased small-scale grower success.
 - SCRUB has been able to buy high-level cleaning tools and bring them around to postharvest crews to show them how to use the materials. It allows the farmers to engage in co-learning, giving them exposure to materials they can purchase on their farm. Also allows them to learn how to use it. For example, PVC tubing that is difficult to clean, what do you do? By facetimeing with a professional they were able to show them a brush suited for cleaning that type of equipment.
 - Demonstrations, demonstrations, demonstrations, and stakeholder involvement!!
 - Collaboration with other FSOP Directors aids in helping our efforts tackle the "big picture" and be able to troubleshoot with others what the needs of the growers are and best ways to tackle them.

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*
 - Before they received this grant, there were small scale farmers who were not served. Many underserved growers in Texas that would not have received this information. Created culturally relevant training and helping growers get certifications allowing them access to larger markets.
 - In Rhode Island, it has allowed them to cover the costs of the trainings, translations services, and farm certifications
 - Reach the people who are not considered "covered" by FSMA rule, smaller growers. Helps them reach larger markets.

- One-on-one training and assistance for small growers can help growers who do not believe their farms can become successful economically become sustainable businesses.
 - Good food safety management = good farm management = sustainability
 - Gateway to other USDA programs
 - Forced to be more inclusive, address the barriers to adopting food safety methods. Allows everyone to grow
 - Accessibility is required by law- makes us directors think more about the socially disadvantaged growers, and better be able to meet them. The more you work with the farmers, the more you learn about their needs, ex: discovering that you may be serving a farmer who is illiterate or visually impaired. You only find this out if you connect with your target audience. Know your people!
 - Ex: English language learners, producing materials for people of low-literacy
 - One-on-one technical assistance is now possible due to FSOP
3. If you could add another year of funding to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*
- More money = more farms
 - As a grassroots organization, it allows you to do more focused work. Hire someone for a specific task, also purchase new equipment. Ability to
 - Assess knowledge gain
 - Adoption of practices
 - One-on-one interaction to give farmers access to materials that they would have never had access to.
 - Allows you to exhale, instead of focusing on funding for services, being able to address the needs of more farms.
 - Be able to go to more states, gain more partners
 - Give growers more resources, and allow resource sharing with other FSOP projects.
4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*
- Many times, growers walk away from the trainings and feel powerless and unable to meet the requirements. After re-vamping the training materials, an FSOP director has been able to give farmers confidence that they can implement the food safety methods.
 - Developing resources for beginning farmers that can translate to larger growers.
 - Many farmers are in need of translation services
 - Making our resources less technical, more practical

GROUP 4 - 2022 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/25/2022

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*

We've been able to be a conduit to labs and ultimately help the growers get better/accurate service from the water testing lab. This integrated nicely with the NECAFS water lab map.

Helped demystify/remove concerns connected to growers testing water. Now they know where they stand and aren't scared about the unknown.

Helps engage exempt/excluded growers so they are learning pertinent food safety issues tied to water use. Building relationships with these groups so they know we are here for sound technical support.

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*

We didn't have in-house animation skills to develop the animations that help make the content relatable. Highly professional animation group with end-products that will

Breaking down barriers to cross state and county lines to work more inclusively from a regional perspective

We were able to build a Mobile Unit for Demonstration developed by the Bridging the GAPs curriculum to help demonstrate ag-water treatment.

The FDA has been excited to stay engaged with what is currently being worked on, now we can collaborate and build on what has been developed from the FSOPs

Having access to a community of subject matter experts that you can phone-a-friend and get an answer for our stakeholders along with the state department of agriculture and work virtually to deliver trainings.

Facilitated free training to help build grower knowledge and not leave limited resource growers at a disadvantage.

Helped growers increase their incomes – remove barriers associated with water testing that may have prohibited them from being able to sell to local markets- local farmers market requirement

Helped build a group of about 165 SMEs that understand water treatment and nuances

3. If you could add another year of funding to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*

Advocate for an exotic national FSOP meeting 😊

Update training that we've developed, because subpart E for PSR is still a moving target

Helping provide continuity to personnel who are training and knowledgeable but funded from grant funds

Build out a hands-on demonstration

We would pilot this tool in conjunction with the new ag water requirements in the PSR. Make adjustments.

Translate to other languages, make them more accessible due to various factors (literacy, low hearing, visually impaired)

4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*

Extension personnel and limited resource farmers

Produce growers and handlers that don't have a background- e.g. beginning growers/farmers, students, 4-H

All produce growers and the people that provide technical support including departments of agriculture personnel

water testing labs, which have their own language

2023 Breakout Group Notes

NOTE: Identifying information redacted

Group 1

2023 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/31/2023

-15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*

- ① Having attendees realize they do not want to treat pre-har. ag water
- ② BASSO - hands on activities to drive home key principles which resulted in positive behavior change.
- ③ one on one assistance helped growers get through a GAP audit
- ④ Collaborations from regional meetings that have come out -

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*

- ① - incentive-based resources to help promote activities in rural produce growers
- ② Community-based individuals who are financially supported
- ③ Partnered w/ HBCU to train students and growers and recruit for other training activities
↳ training grad. students/post-docs who are getting ready to enter workforce
- ④ Development of an alternative curriculum to PSA.

3. If you could add another year of funding and/or add a person (discipline / skill) to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*

- ① - GA Tech - add another partner
- ② more field trips, socially-disadvantaged partners better engaged.
- ③ more demonstration sites.
- ④ more audiences
- ⑤ Translating/improving accessibility

4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work and what would help better distribute it? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*

Communications coord. with dedicated focus.

Eng. 2nd language. stakeholders -

Socioeconomic disadvantaged producers

More resource development. → expanded access./coverage

No stipends for participation - may enable their participation

Q1: Stronger trainers who are better able to serve their stakeholders
↳ [redacted]

[redacted] - getting people access to targeted training they need. Building collab. in Food safety w/ between participants

[redacted] better network for sharing resources between SMEs

Seeing participants becoming competent. Learning the best / leading on their own

Q2: [redacted] - students becoming Food safety professionals supporting community-based stakeholder org. Supporting GAP certificate

Putting all the records in Google Forms → next FSOP helped turn it these forms into an App. → [redacted]

Offering specialized training w/ regional centers that are highly subsidized.

Q3: Qualitative follow-up evals
Spanish-speaking SME
Marketing plan for roll-out - communications / coordinator
Travel awards
Subsidized training cost.

GROUP 2 - 2023 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/31/2023

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*

Processor went from idea to product and are in six grocery stores (4 products) in 2 years;

Training classes and outreach partnerships with other organizations (Georgia Grown marketing association) that have developed future partnerships (unexpected dividend from project);

SCPP advisory board is diverse and are supporting initiatives, existing resources, etc. to help bridge gap (buy-in);

state departments of ag have been sharing resources to be more efficient in how they spend their time;

FSOP has led to additional grant funding;

providing support to a community that was previously closed to external (out-group, outside the community) help;

previous FSOP project was adopted by a shared-use processing space and are running this program with support from previous PI;

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*

Week-long series of farm visits in urban farms in Atlanta to broaden audience for work and helped the GA collaborator to have team support and expose other grant collaborators that do not work in those specific areas with those specific partnerships;

regional meetings have been critical to ability to network, promote programs, and facilitate collaboration (seconded);

inspired another grant submission that allows expansion of food safety team (100% increase);

opportunities;

networks have enabled collaboration that supported combining of multiple, duplicate resources into a consolidated training to maximize impact, more effectively train, and meet needs beyond region;

supports collaboration/team approach/cultivate community (mentioned several times); allows regions/teams/commodities with similar needs to cross regional boundaries to meet national needs;

supports collaboration with universities/partners that otherwise would not have been able to (interest in this collaboration was always there, but grant/call/funding availability allowed to project to actually be carried out);

good platform to support new scientists in their program development; helped connect growers in states with low representation of these producers to take the necessary trainings (PSA);

3. If you could add another year of funding and/or add a person (discipline / skill) to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*

Spend more time training/in outreach in a specific needed area/group (seconded);

take what was developed and apply it with individual/small groups of growers to test it out/“break it” to see if/how it works through one-on-one technical assistance/facilitation/coaching (examples given of ways of structuring training with more time, homework, buy-in, feedback);

add a person to revitalize existing programs to incorporate learnings;

institutionalize succession-planning;

4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work and what would help better distribute it? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*

Audience: small and mid-size producers;

Distribution: one-on-one hand-holding; short webinars (themed?) to update about projects throughout the year and given audience an opportunity to ask questions;

symposia applications at national meetings;

utilize Clearinghouse to better ID individuals and specialties;

offer exhibits at conferences, with industry, etc.;

variable output modalities (postcards, social media, etc.)

Final thoughts:

FSOP provides community/builds relationships to support the work through meetings, research updates, etc. (seconded);

GROUP 3 - 2023 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions - Green

5/31/2023

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*
 - a. *As part of conference, underserved farmers were able to attend and engage when they could not have*
 - b. *Navajo ag co-op reached out as a result of initial contact with tribes, especially due to concern over costs of training*
 - c. *Listserv from inspectors for processors shared with X, funding and subsequent rounds built trust*
 - d. *Gradual trust building and acceptance of Hmong populations in Missouri due to longevity of (multiple rounds of) funding. This enabled translation of resources to Hmong and observed successes*
 - e. *Although an existing underserved relationship is expected, time and money are necessary to build relationships and these grayer interactions are challenging to justify*
 - f. *Funding improved collaboration with 1890s institutions because it created greater capacity*
 - g. *Review of the research and related information gaps highlights availability of and need for science to support risk-management decisions that producers already make*
 - h. *This work can be leveraged in tandem with other grants (such as IPM and SARE funds) to ensure holistic outreach and support to communities who need it most*
 - i. *Developed training for cottage food that anticipated emerging food laws to meet needs as they emerged*

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*
 - a. *This meeting! Facilitates collaboration and connection, not expecting everyone to come up with the same ideas*
 - b. *See question 1: reaching audiences who could not otherwise be supported to directly fund their work and build trust*
 - c. *Communities may not trust the government, but they can trust individuals who come from the community and provide support*
 - i. *Opened up opportunities to connect with more populations (small processors) that may not be subject to the rule but need same concepts*
 - ii. *Challenge of state ag working with tribes on FSMA topics can be bridged through these projects (with invitation/approval from the tribes). When you are a resource for the tribes, approval becomes easier*
 - iii. *Money is not enough, you need to be trustworthy and you need to be a person who matters to them*

- iv. This goes both ways; regulators also need our trusted relationships to help improve understanding and learn how to work with producers
 - d. We share successes well internally, but need to promote outcomes more externally, especially to those with greater need
 - i. The Clearinghouse is intended for this, USDA twitter and website does this, but these are not proving to be successful methods
3. If you could add another year of funding and/or add a person (discipline / skill) to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*
- a. Find better ways to share outputs: SARE gives outputs on a USB for interested parties to understand their program and what can realistically be applied
 - b. Partner with people who understand marketing to really understand how to get the word out. University communications should be a resource, but it isn't being utilized
 - c. Overcome technological barrier: low technology access for rural and plain sect producers
 - d. Understand how to better support ongoing trust building/working relationships
 - e. Work relies on majority or total soft funding for many of us. To ensure retention and preserve working relationships, there needs to be space to maintain funding (especially when grant applications require such detailed plans of work) Interim funding is extremely valuable in this
 - f. Capacity to train the next generation of food safety experts and scientists (interns and students particularly), especially those who come from underserved communities. This emerging cohort has a particularly strong need for continuous education. Extension professionals often come from food production, so how do we spark their interest in moving to food safety? We need to understand their resource levels and needs to market to them correctly and we need the funding and consistency to ensure effective training
 - g. Better mechanisms to keep projects going after grant cycles end. Training that used to cost \$15 now costs \$300, PCHF training in particular suffers from this
4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work and what would help better distribute it? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*
- a. Tribes need the work, but it requires their letters of support (which requires tribal approval) to get the funds. This cart before horse approach presents challenges but the funding also encourages distribution of past work that has proven successful
 - b. "If you eat, you are involved in food safety."
 - c. Reducing cost barriers to access food safety education utilizes proven success stories to extend impact of the work (especially after grants end)
 - d. Many of our cross-funding partners are also a source of cross-topic collaboration to improve distribution (for instance, IPM groups can support training)
 - e. Regionalizing our positions allows better reach by people who are more specialized in what they do

- f. Recognizing our more global capacity to share information, tools, and resources that are better tailored to individual needs; scaling back of Covid policies may reduce this
 - i. Remote trainings are a huge asset in expanding our reach, this should not be ignored
 - ii. Hybrids are similarly a major asset—often bridges the needs of diverse populations
- g. Regulators are also a major audience to understand these unique producers, their needs, and their capabilities. Our role is to help ensure they are not overzealous or unrealistic in their inspections
 - i. Regulators often engage with training because they recognize their need for more knowledge and context (for example, risk vs. Hazards)

GROUP 4 - 2023 National USDA NIFA FSOP Project Director's Meeting

Project Breakout Group Discussions

5/31/2023

~15 minutes per question

1. Tell us a story about a specific individual or group success that you've experienced with your project. *Intent: Success story ideas and themes.*
 - Bringing interns from Guam to NE to teach them about food safety
 - Bringing PSA training and hands-on training to minority farmers
 - Reach and impact of trainings (PSA)
 - Seeing the people who come to workshops are farmers and then they turn into trainers themselves – wanted to see themselves as a consultant
 - Helping a food hub that is growing develop a food safety plan so that they can aggregate produce and bring it to the Bay Area
 - Have been contacted by schools, consultants, etc. To use videos in for other audiences
 - Successes in approaches to understanding what growers need – design and work with people to develop resources that they can use
 - Helped growers develop market access relationships

2. What did this FSOP award enable that would not have otherwise been possible? *Intent: Capture the impact the FSOP program in the words of the grantees.*
 - Shifted objectives of the proposal in order to better serve the need of the audience
 - Mobile training vehicle to bring training to the field
 - Allowed for travel to visit processors – allows for access to target audience
 - Provided access to hire expertise at outside institutions
 - The funding truly makes the work possible – there isn't internal funding to facilitate this work
 - Created a network of shared use facilities and they now communicate with each other outside of the project

3. If you could add another year of funding and/or add a person (discipline / skill) to your project, what would you do? *Intent: Identify outstanding needs based on recently completed work.*
 - Doing social media (and youtube) well – sharing content where people are looking for it
 - o Funnel content from across the nation and let a promotion expert compile and push it across
 - o People want to make a connection to someone on social media (they aren't going to connect with organizations)
 - Funding to develop hands-on trainings. These types of trainings are more expensive than presentation style training
 - o They require more trainers, more equipment, more time, and more expensive venues
 - Need for social scientists or behavioral scientists to cross collaborate on projects to bring in that additional perspective. When dealing with humans, we need to meet them where they are at. We all think in the terms of data and that isn't super approachable.
 - o They will also help with our evaluation of behavior change and motivation

- Remembering to connect back to the target audience and ask them what's going on and what would work best for them
 - Translation of content into alternative languages
4. How would you describe the audience that might benefit from this work and what would help better distribute it? *Intent: Allow others to understand the audience that would benefit from completed work and intentionally extend that work through regional center networks, clearinghouse, etc.*
- We need to be getting information to our audience in the way that they want it and how they are going to access it
 - Leveraging partnerships with NGOs and other non-extension organizations
 - Nutritionists
 - Minority farm alliances
 - Non-profit organizations and work with them to present educational opportunity as a pre-conference program
 - National manufacturing network – and disseminate information through them