

# Food Hubs and Food Safety

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## Welcome and Thanks for Joining the Webinar

November 18, 2016

### The NECAFS Project Team

Elizabeth Newbold (UVM)  
Chris Callahan (UVM)  
Betsy Bihn (Cornell)  
Amanda Kinchla (UMass)  
Luke LaBorde (Penn State)  
Chris Walsh (UMD)

### Today's Presenters

Lisa Reeder and Adrianna Vargo (Local Food Hub, VA)  
Hannah Mellion (Farm Fresh Rhode Island, RI)  
Liz Buxton (Western MA Food Processing Center, MA)  
Colleen Hanlon-Smith and Justin Nadeau (Unity Food Hub, ME)  
Brad Stevens (Commonwealth Kitchen, MA)  
Bill Cavanaugh and Robin Morris (Mad River Food Hub, VT)

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**Adrianna Vargo**  
Director of Grower Services

**Lisa Reeder**  
Farm and Food Access Coordinator

Food Hubs & Food Safety (NECAFS Webinar)  
November 18, 2016





**We're a nonprofit organization that partners with Virginia farmers to increase community access to local food.**

**We provide the support services, infrastructure, and market opportunities that connect people with food grown close to home.**

# How It Works



# Snapshot

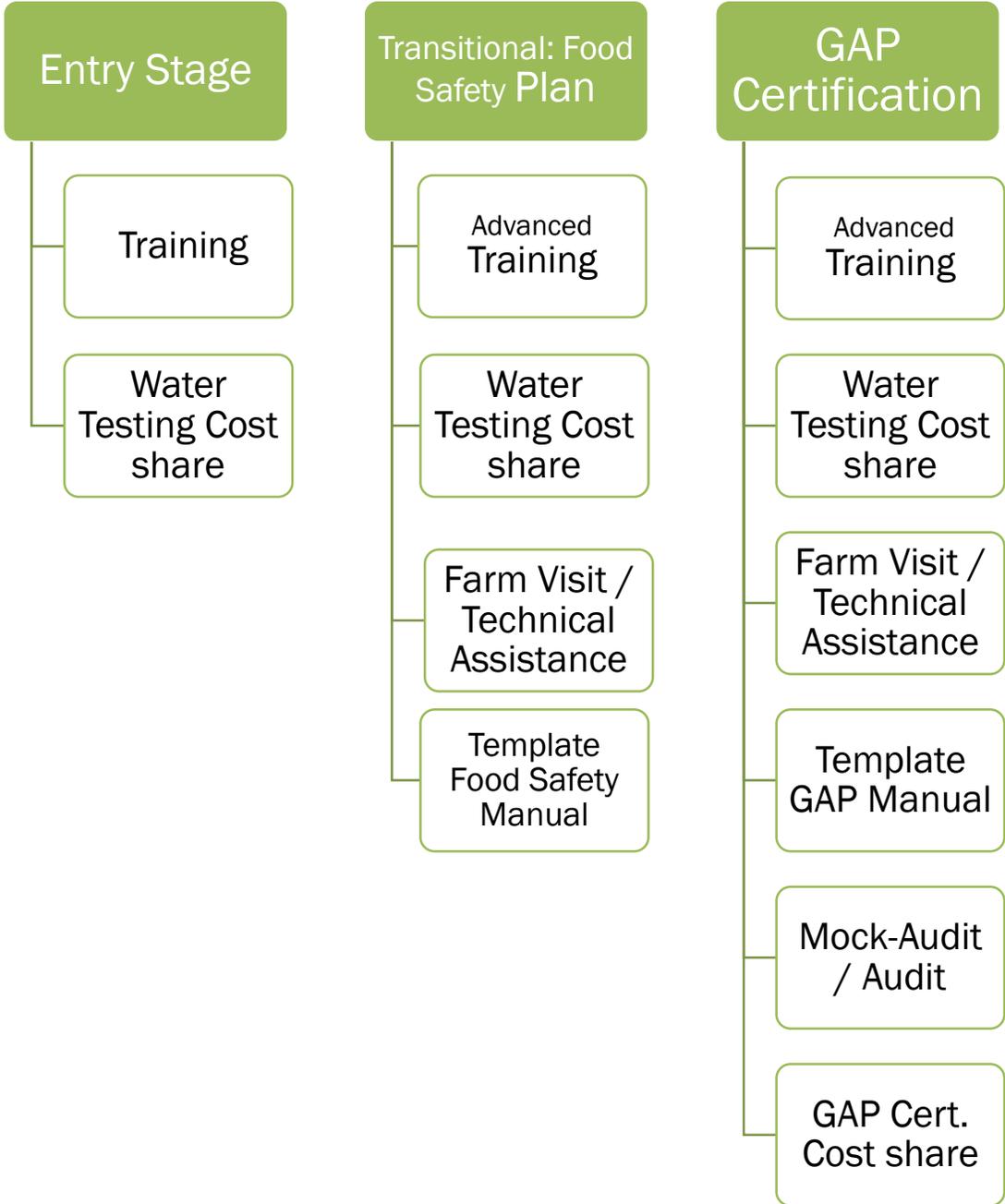
- 3000 sq ft GHP-certified warehouse
- 3 refrigerated vehicles
- 75 partner farms & producers
- 200+ customers: institutions, retailers, restaurants, distributors
- Fresh produce, meat, eggs, cheese, value-added





# Tiered Approach to Food Safety Requirements

*Support Services and Resources for Partner Producers*



# CHALLENGES to Food Safety Work:

## Grower Diversity

- ✓ Geographic
- ✓ Scale: 1 ac – 500+ ac
- ✓ Experience level
- ✓ Capacity & Resources

## On Farm Infrastructure Needs

- ✓ Post harvest handling
- ✓ Storage
- ✓ Refrigerated transport

## Market Demands

- ✓ Differ by market segment
- ✓ Inconsistencies and lack of knowledge
- ✓ Little to no shared investment



# Outcomes and Successes

- ✓ Established training partnerships
- ✓ Cost share program for water testing, GAP audits
  - Average per farm audit cost: \$500
- ✓ Effective technical assistance for GAP Certification
  - 2-3 farm visits + 10 hours office time per farm
  - Audit coordination and advocacy
  - Additional resources provided: signage packs, worker training DVD's, spill-response kits
- ✓ Increased quality and consistency of product lines
- ✓ Culture of food safety, preparedness, and information sharing among our stakeholders



## Ongoing Work

- ✓ FSMA Navigation and Compliance
    - LFH - Preventative Controls Rule for Distribution Facility
    - Partner Farms - Produce Safety Rule
  - ✓ Further develop Supplier Verification Program
  - ✓ Increase number of partner farms with USDA GAP Certs, and transition some to Harmonized GAP
  - ✓ Consider market requirements, and regulatory compliance issues, to inform organizational growth and program development
- 



# Local Food Hub

Providing access to farm sourced food  for everyone

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Follow Us! Facebook, Instagram, Twitter  
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**FARM**   
**FRESH RI**

# Food Safety Presentation

Hannah Mellion

11.18.16

NECAFS Webinar

# History & Mission

Farm Fresh Rhode Island is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization founded in 2004.

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Mission: To grow a local food system that values the environment, health, and quality of life of Rhode Island farmers and eaters.



MARKET MOBILE



VEGGIE BOX



HARVEST KITCHEN



CHALLENGES



SUCCESSES



FUTURE

**FRANKLIN COUNTY CDC**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**WESTERN MA FOOD PROCESSING CENTER**

Serving Western Massachusetts

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS



FOOD PROCESSING CENTER

## The Western Mass. Food Processing Center

Providing Food Product  
Development, Commercial  
Kitchen Rental,  
Co-Packing and Prototype  
Support for New England  
Specialty Food Producers.



# Food Safety Challenges



But I **AM** wearing a  
hairnet.

# Lessons Learned

- Continual education and training is key;
- Food safety is everyone's responsibility;
- Clients are your best defense and your worst enemy;
- You can never be too vigilant or too strict;
- Clients need help navigating the maze of federal, state and local regulations;
- Train the Trainer, keeping up on regulation changes and changed to the food safety landscape is an active pursuit.

# Outstanding Questions

- Timelines
- Compliance Regulations
- Responsibility and Liability
- Costs
- Continuing Education and Training



FARMING & FOOD PARTNERS

MAINE FARM SHARE

WEEKLY HARVEST NOTES

# UNITY FOOD HUB

69 SCHOOL ST, UNITY, MAINE

# CommonWealth Kitchen

Boston's food business accelerator and food manufacturing innovation lab

*We're on a mission to build a just, equitable and sustainable regional food economy!*



CommonWealth Kitchen  
196 Quincy Street  
Dorchester, MA.

**WE BELIEVE** that a **RESILIENT** and **EQUITABLE** local economy *requires* closing Greater Boston's growing wealth divide by **promoting inclusive entrepreneurship** and **creating jobs** for people who have been impacted by racial, social, or economic inequality.

[www.commonwealthkitchen.org](http://www.commonwealthkitchen.org)

# We help build and scale food companies and create jobs, while strengthening our regional food economy.



- Food biz 101 & product development classes
- Assistance w/ recipe development & scaling, permits, food flow, licenses, labels & packaging, insurance, business planning....

- Use of our 16k SF of **fully-equipped commercial kitchens**
- Manufacturing assistance
- Help with sourcing, distribution & access to markets
- Aggregate purchasing
- Hiring & staffing assistance
- Workshops on legal, finance, bookkeeping HR, marketing....

- Small-batch manufacturing services for wholesalers, restaurants, farms, & institutional customers
- Recipe development and scaling
- Coordinated marketing/branding
- Assistance w/access to capital & graduation into retail, wholesale, and co-packing



**Common Dreams. Common Purpose. CommonWealth.**

196 Quincy Street, Dorchester, MA.



# A sampling of our members' delicious products!



## OUR IMPACT:

- **25+ early stage start-ups** in the pipeline working on recipes, packaging, business plans, etc.
- **40+ member companies**, on average, making jam, sauces, baked goods, juice, frozen desserts, plus over a dozen food trucks and caterers; **70% minority and/or women-owned businesses**;
- **150+ employed**; 70% minority and/or women workers;
- **35+ graduates** in their own retail, wholesale and co-pack operations, including Roxy's Grilled Cheese, Clover Food Lab, Voltage Coffee, McCrea's candies, Seta's Mediterranean, BATCH Ice Cream & ForkLift Catering; over **450 jobs created** since 2009!
- **25+ co-packing customers**- bottled sauces, refrigerated & frozen products, baked goods, value-added farm products, retail packs, food service packs, processing surplus produce....
- **\$25m/year+** in combined gross revenue generated by our companies!



# STRENGTHENING THE FOOD ECONOMY

In addition to our shared kitchens, we operate a **small-batch food manufacturing social enterprise**. We provide recipe development and contract processing to wholesalers, restaurants, and farmers to get more local produce into the food supply, help small businesses scale production, and convert part-time and seasonal jobs into consistent, full employment.



## Sample contracts:

- Salsa for NOLA's Fresh
- Ravioli for Nella Pasta
- Apple crisps for Red Apple Farm
- Granola for KIFF Foods
- Bottled sauces for MeiMei street kitchen & Island Creek Oysters
- Tomato processing for Ward's Berry Farm, Verrill Farm & Northeastern U
- Hummus for Amir's Naturals
- Mac & cheese for the Farm at Jasper Hill
- Hot sauce for Alex's Ugly Sauce
- BBQ sauce for Sweet Cheek's restaurant
- Value-added products for Farmer Dave's, Siena Farms, Langwater Farm, Stillman's, etc.



**CRAVING BOSTON**  
 CHEW ON THIS THAT'S THE SPIRIT RECIPES NEIGHBORHOOD NOSH TABLE TALK

**Commonwealth Kitchen**

**This Kitchen Is in the Business of Empowering Local Entrepreneurs**

CommonWealth Kitchen is a food incubator that's launching careers and bringing delicious food to underserved areas of Boston.

By Lisa Johnson



“There is nothing so **POWERFUL** as an **IDEA** whose time has come.”  
 - Victor Hugo



**COMMON WEALTH KITCHEN**  
**2015 BEST INCUBATOR**  
**Boston BEST OF BOSTON 2015**  
 Formerly known as CropCircle Kitchen, this culinary incubator is a haven for upstart jam-makers and chocolate connoisseurs looking for a shared space to turn their craft into a business.  
 Last year, CWK took this to a new level with a massive Dorchester production facility featuring shared kitchen space, co-packing capabilities, and standalone workspaces for the likes of Alex's Ugly Sauce & Just Add Cooking.



**Common Goals. Common Purpose. Common Good. CommonWealth.**



# Mad River Food Hub

## Robin Morris & Bill Cavanaugh

Mad River Food Hub was founded in 2011 to fill a vital need for shared-use processing space, storage, distribution for makers and growers in the Mad River Valley, Central Vermont area.



### Mad River Food Hub offers:

- **FDA & USDA inspected processing rooms**, including a full commercial kitchen with movable modular equipment that can be adapted to any use.
- **Dry aging** facility to produce dry-cured salamis under USDA inspection (ready to eat).
- A large amount of **dry, cold, and freezer storage** rentable by the pallet. Used by local farmers, brewers, restaurants, value added processors.
- **Two trucks** on the road 5 days a week facilitating distribution and backhauling of local products e.g.
  - Cheese to Jasper Hill, Craftsbury VT
  - Pigs to Prohibition Pig, Waterbury, VT
- **Technical assistance** – Planning to Food Safety



# Who's Regulating Food Safety @ MRFH

- **Vermont State Department of Health**
  - Processor gets license, facility must be licenced
  - Limited oversight, processor responsible for food safety
- **State & USDA (Vermont State is “equal to” USDA)**
  - Facility has a grant of inspection – not processor
  - **Raw Facility**
    - HACCP plans for raw product allows local producers to butcher at MRFH
    - USDA &/or State meat inspection means consistent level of scrutiny with an inspector on site daily
    - But, USDA over State inspection allows our customers access to much larger out of state/online markets
  - **Ready to Eat (RTE) Facility**
    - RTE processing allows customers to add significant value to local produce
    - RTE processing has the highest food safety risks
    - We needed to have strong HACCP, SOP, and SSOP to make RTE work
    - Regular environmental testing for listeria and batch testing for salmonella



**USDA & FDA set the minimum food safety requirement – retailers set the true requirement**



# MRFH HACCP Plans

- 10 HACCP Plans in total covering raw, RTE, and dry-cured
  - Raw Ground
  - Raw Intact (cuts of meat)
  - Cooked/Smoked Deli Meats
  - Cooked Soups and Broths
  - Meat Spread (bacon jam)
  - Bacon (Fully cooked)
  - Bacon (partially cooked)
  - Dry-cured Sausages
  - Jerky
  - Pot Pie
- Currently HACCP under development for whole cured muscle: prosciutto, coppa, bresaola
- More HACCP plans as new customers come on board, or current customers change their product offerings





# Food Safety Challenges and Successes

## Challenges

- MRFH holds all liability for USDA HACCP Plans in our facility
  - Customers come to us with varying levels of skill/knowledge about food safety.
  - It's our job to stay on top of each customer's food safety and HACCP
- MRFH is a community-focused facility.
  - It's a big sandpit with many players.
  - On any given day there could be dozens of people in and out simultaneously.
- Distribution/Storage
  - Walk-in cooler and freezer are very high traffic.
  - Need to maintain cold chain from receiving to final destination of product

## Successes

- 50+ community customers
- Regulatory relationships
- Graduated Customers
  - We did our job – graduating customers
  - Joe's Soups, a business producing RTE meat & veg soups was able to leave and move into their own USDA facility because of his experience here
- Dry Curing Facility.
  - Dry Cured RTE products are very complicated from a food safety standpoint
  - Currently the only dry curing facility in Vermont
  - One of very few shared-use dry curing facilities in the country.



# Looking Ahead @ MRFH

- **FSMA!**
  - We are an FDA facility in addition to USDA
  - Important for our business, but also a point of leadership for us in the greater community.
  - Farmers and producers in our area have us as a resource for food safety knowledge and experience.
  - PCQI Training
    - Having a PCQI on staff is another thing we can offer to our customers who might need guidance, or want to avoid taking the training themselves
- **Education**
  - Key aspect of future recruitment and on-boarding
  - Rolling out Butchery training this winter, with a focus on job development and food safety
- **Continuous improvement of HACCP Plans, SOP and SSOP**
  - Stepping up environmental testing
  - Increased temperature monitoring and datalogging

**Food Safety never finishes**

# Thank You!

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<https://goo.gl/forms/kLSunsiQQCVPEAvI2>