NECAFS
The Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety
Who:
- University researchers, educators and extension specialists
- State regulatory and enforcement agency partners
- Local food and farming organizations, NFP’s
- Consultants & Industry associations
- Small and medium sized producers, small processors, buyers
- Other regional centers and initiatives, lead regional coordination center, USDA/FDA

Goal:
Enhance produce safety and preventive controls training, education, and outreach among small and medium sized farms and small processors in the Northeast.

Objectives:
1. Establish Foundational Network Structure
2. Build Capacity, Competency, and Collaboration
3. Develop and Deliver Educational Programs
4. Evaluate and Assess Progress and Impact
5. Sustain Good Work

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Benefits of a Collaboration

- Prevents duplication of effort
- Eliminates fragmented approaches
- Collective response to issues are:
  - Informed
  - Integrated
  - Interdisciplinary
Collaboration is a Continuum
NECAFS development from 2016 - 2020

Communication
- Newsletter
- Listserve
- Webinars

Connecting
- Networking at Annual Meeting
- Dedicated time to develop stakeholder relationships

Coordinating
- Information sharing
- Food Safety Resource Clearinghouse

Community Building
- Formation of regional workgroups

Contracting
- Hiring staff to execute workgroup activities

Collaboration
- Tailored, interdisciplinary approach to address needs
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Overview of Produce Safety Workgroup

Feedback after 2020 Annual Meeting was clear
  • Discussion must be informed by all network members
  • Need for more dedicated discussion of research and educational needs
  • Need for year-round research and education prioritization and coordination with dedicated time to contextualize and understand nuances of identified needs

Community Building
  • Formation of regional workgroups
Root Cause Analysis

- Identified problems
- Collecting perspectives
- Discuss issues
- Determine root cause/barriers
- Brainstorm solutions
- Decide on activities to put solutions into action
Northeast State Regulators compiled list of **top issues observed** during inspections in 2020.

**Break Out Session 1 –** What is happening and why?

**Break Out 2 –** What should we do about these needs?

**Break Out 3 –** How do we sustain integrated communication on research and educational needs?

Expand/add your own **examples** to list. Identify specific **needs** do these observations represent.

Identify **barriers preventing adoption** of improved practice and the **action needed to overcome** that barrier.

Strategies for **establishing a framework** for continuous communication.
Planning Activities for NECAFS

- Regularly identify key produce safety priorities
  - Survey partners annually to identify priority areas

- Focused break out group based on priority
  - Host annual break out groups to expand and articulate barriers
  - Publish summary report

- Integrated and interdisciplinary discussion
  - Host research summit to discuss integrated approach
  - Publish summary report from research summit

- Sharing Information Across NECAFS Network
  - Complete lit reviews of existing published research
  - Host webinars to share information on research across the network