

Summary of Previous Discussions and Outcomes

NECAFS

The Northeast Center to
Advance Food Safety



This work is supported by the
Food Safety Outreach Program
grant no. 2020-70020-32264
from the USDA National
Institute of Food and
Agriculture.

Discussion in Philly, PA – January 2020



Produce Safety Workgroup meeting at
NECAFS in Philly, PA



Group brainstorm of “research needs”



Call and answer formed



Clear need to translate existing research
into educational outputs for use

Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP) Award

Extending and Summarizing Existing Produce Safety Research

FSOP proposal was funded by USDA

NECAFS virtual meeting in 2021

Regional inspectional observations of noncompliance and misunderstandings were collected, summarized and discussed in break-out groups

Summarized that the top 5 common misunderstandings and noncompliance issues. Breakout groups walked through root cause analysis and research questions identification.

Formed Research Questions for Literature Reviews after Breakout Group Discussion

Dropped Covered Produce

Wildlife Contamination

Pathogen Survival on Different Materials

Personal Possessions

Wash Water

Irrigation Water Systems

Bridging the Gap between Research and Application

Dropped produce

- How risky is it?
- *What* is it??
- What is the *ground*?



§ 112.114 - Dropped covered produce is produce that drops to the ground before harvest.

Bridging the Gap between Research and Application

- Summarize the research
 - Anything related to ground contact of raw produce
 - Bare soil and various mulches
 - Many variables to consider
 - Lab vs. Field studies
 - Questions for future research
- Ground moisture, contact time, and crop features influence contamination risk.
 - Bare soil presents a lower risk of contaminating produce than plastic mulch.
 - Mulches may promote pathogen persistence in soil, as compared to bare ground.
 - Mulches may also protect produce by limiting contact with contaminated soils.

Bridging the Gap between Research and Application

- Research conclusions aren't often definitive.
- How to apply the findings to specific instances on the farm?
- Best way to present this information to inform good risk management decisions?
- How do we use this process in our work?

Risk-Based Thinking Approach – Not As Easy As It May Seem

- Next segment focuses on dropped produce –did you read the article sent to you for homework?
 - Don Schaffner and Ben Chapman will lead us in an analysis of risk mitigation so all can see how this works and hopefully all will appreciate the challenges
 - Reviewing the literature doesn't make the usable conclusions black and white
 - In the upcoming breakout-session everyone will have a chance to weigh the research vs real on-farm situations and maybe be able to derive risk mitigating steps that make sense on the farm
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