

FY 2016 Food Safety Outreach Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Applications are due June 02, 2016 at 5pm EST

1. Will the regional centers only address produce?

The regional centers should focus on produce safety training for small and medium sized producers and processors, but we encourage partners and/or sub-contracts that focus on other commodities regulated by FDA.

2. Can we include another collaborating institution that is not in the same region?

YES.

3. Do all applicants need to request a matching waiver?

All those not listed in the RFA as exempt will need to request a matching waiver in their budget justification. Complete instructions for completing the waiver can be found in the Request for Applications.

4. Are all members of the project team required to attend a Project Director meeting?

Beginning in year 2 of the community and multi-state projects, all Project Directors must attend an annual meeting. Other team members may attend as funds allow.

5. How does USDA-NIFA define “niche” audiences? Niche audiences are identified and justified by the applicant. Examples of niche audiences may include, but are not limited to, Amish, Hmong, Vietnamese, Somali, Burmese farmers, migrant workers and/or non-English speakers or other groups where there may be cultural or language barriers.

6. Can 5 different PDs apply from the same organization? Are they eligible under a single funding category (pilot, community, or multi-state)? Project directors are eligible to submit one application to the program. Multiple applications across priority areas by the same Project Directors will not be reviewed by the panel.

7. Are small farmers that sell their produce to markets such as Whole Foods, eligible to apply for this program? Yes

8. Are PD’s on the regional center RFA eligible to apply for this program? Regional Center Project Directors are eligible to submit as Co-Project Directors.

9. Can you explain the matching requirement? The Food Safety Outreach Program does have a matching requirement, but there are multiple exemptions and opportunities for waivers. Refer to pages 12-14 of the Food Safety Outreach Program Request for Application found at www.nifa.usda.gov/food-safety-outreach-program, for a thorough explanation of the matching Requirement. If you still have questions, please send an email to [Dr. Jodi Williams](mailto:Dr.JodiWilliams).

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10. Are county extension agents eligible for pilot projects? County extension agents are eligible for pilot projects.

11. Does an existing food safety program include a master food safety advisor program or master gardener program? Yes, those may be considered existing food safety education programs.

12. Can you explain the relationship between the regional centers and those applying for a multi-state educational grant (up to \$400,000 category)?

The multi-state training and education projects are different from the Regional Centers. The multi-state projects can work within their state or across multiple states that may or may not be contiguous. The Regional Centers will have direct contact with the National Coordination Center and is therefore part of the overall infrastructure. The multi-state projects would interact directly with the Regional Center within the Project Directors region to ensure any new curricula, best practices, lessons-learned, and or other metrics are reported up to the National Coordination Center.

13. How does USDA NIFA define "FSMA approved" curriculum?

The USDA does not define "FSMA approved" curriculum. We would like the awardees to work with the National Coordination Center through their Regional Centers to train using modified, and developed curriculum that has been FDA recognized.

14. Is it possible to apply as both Community Outreach Project (in a single state) and Multistate Education and Training Project with a similar topic?

Applicants may only submit one application to the program as the Project Director.

15. What are the main goals that the NIFA/ FSOP program?

The purpose of the program is to provide customized food safety education to specific audiences affected by the new guidelines established under FSMA, specifically Small and mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers.

16. Can the multi-state training category mean that multiple counties apply from a single state or must it be state-wide or can it include more than one state?

Multiple counties from a single state are eligible to apply. Applicants can also be from multiple states.

17. Most small farms will not be covered by or will be exempt from the FSMA regulation. Will there be any grant funding available to large farms that actually have to comply with FSMA in two years?

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18. Are producers and growers that contribute to a mobile farmer's market eligible for this grant?
Yes

19. If most of the farmers we work with are exempt from FMSA, should training materials still primarily address compliance with FSMA, or can it be more general such as GAPs training?
Training materials should address compliance with FSMA.

20. Can fisheries and cheese processing be included?
Yes

21. **Will there be any preference given in the selection of awards to applicants from minority serving universities?** We always support and encourage applications from Minority Serving Institutions, but there are no provisions written into the legislation to provide preference.

The Food Safety Outreach Program team conducted a webinar on Tuesday, April 19th from 2:30-3:30 pm EST. The webinar provided potential applicants an opportunity to learn about the overall program, the contents of the RFA, and the application process. The **Webinar Recording (04/19/16) can be found at <https://nifa.usda.gov/event/food-safety-outreach-program-rfa-webinar>**