

# **Steering Committee Survey Summary**

**FOOD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP OF MINNESOTA**

**JULY - AUGUST 2022**

**Steering Committee Survey Summary  
Food Safety Partnership of Minnesota**

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## Executive Summary

A nine-question Microsoft Teams survey distributed in July 2022 via email to 32 Food Safety Partnership of Minnesota Steering Committee contacts yielded eight submissions. In context with realities of Food, Pools, and Lodging Services (FPLS) priorities, available staff time, and funding levels, the survey responses suggest a new direction for FSP and the FSP Steering Committee.

This report recommends the Food Safety Partnership of Minnesota and its Steering Committee:

- Pivot toward more concise and broadly accessible training/educational offerings.
- Reach out directly to associations and individuals who will help prioritize and amplify food safety messages for all Minnesotans.
- Draw connections between food safety practices and equity, inclusion, and sustainability.

To describe and define how the Steering Committee will support these actions, we propose to focus efforts in fourth quarter 2022 through 2023 on developing a Steering Committee Charter.

## Survey gathered Steering Committee input

In 2022, Partnership and Workforce Development Unit (PWDU) staff responsible for convening the Food Safety Partnership Steering Committee are returning to regular duties after significant disruption of work due to MDH COVID-19 response assignments. The unit and FPLS section do not have the resources needed to plan and host a real-time collaboration with Steering Committee members. We instead used email, a nine-question survey (Microsoft Forms), and this Steering Committee Survey Summary report to gather, summarize, and share thoughts and ideas about the near future of the Food Safety Partnership of Minnesota.

The survey link was sent to 32 individuals: Steering Committee members on the most recent meeting invitation list (11/06/2019), plus individuals filling positions vacated by former Steering Committee members who have moved or retired. Delivery failed to one recipient for whom we were unable to find a current email address.

The survey link was open between 7/22 and 8/19, though the initial email indicated it would close on 7/27. Two individuals emailed to say they had missed the response window, and we provided an opportunity for them to participate.

We received eight survey submissions, including one from the survey author. In this summary report, we have grouped responses into themes. Responses such as “unsure” are omitted; all other responses are included here.

Survey responses were anonymous.

## Engagement ideas

**Main ideas:** Initiate or build upon existing relationships with professional associations to help identify relevant topics and issues, including structural racism, and to amplify messages. Provide on-demand training, education, and outreach. Offer CEUs for Minnesota Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) renewal.

## STEERING COMMITTEE SURVEY SUMMARY

### 1. What ideas do you have to improve and expand our engagement with industry partners?

#### **Theme: Focus on emerging trends**

*Industry partners often have goals (for stakeholders) and set trends based on changes in technology. It would be helpful to understand where FSP SC fits within this space, to benefit from and probably even contribute to what industry wants to accomplish (short, mid and long term).*

#### **Theme: Improve delivery methods to better meet audience needs**

*Engage the community to learn more about structural inequities, racism and bias in the food industry and regulatory system. Provide forms of engagement and learning that allow participation among groups who can not attend meetings during state business hours or use virtual platforms.*

*If there is any way we can get our meeting and agenda posted in the Restaurant Association, Lodging Association, and Resort Association Newsletters, or if there is a combined newsletter sent for all. A brief description of who we are and please take time to join us. If there is any way the meeting can be recorded so they can view it on their own time it would be even better.*

#### **Theme: Offer CFPM credit**

*Use FSP activities/learnings to generate CEUs for CFPM. Keep meetings/learnings at an hour or less and single topics. Relate or acknowledge the monetary benefits to high compliance rates.*

#### **Theme: Pick up existing work**

*Use responses from the recent EHS-Net survey to help guide how we provide food safety information.*

*Need to continue the work we were starting to explore in late 2019 for doing multi-media food safety messaging.*

*Use GovDelivery and social media to do targeted announcements or sharing of resources.*

#### **Theme: Recruit additional groups/individuals for engagement**

*Could we engage with industry groups (e.g., Hospitality MN and others) who might already have data and info about effective strategies for reaching retail food workers, owners, operators?*

## STEERING COMMITTEE SURVEY SUMMARY

*Reach out to the associations and advisory committees that they belong to and get them involved so they can spread the word to others. Work with the Governor's Food Safety and Defense Task Force to engage industry.*

### 2. What ideas do you have to improve and expand our engagement with academia?

**Main ideas:** Match FSP needs and resources to existing or proposed work of U of M Extension (practical application) and/or research groups. Reach out directly to academics for a better understanding of needs.

#### **Theme: Gather input from groups/individuals**

*Academia has a 3-part mission: teaching, research and Extension. In which of these areas does FSP SC want to engage and be involved? Academics are generally amenable to collaborative efforts, and would be open to co-grant opportunities, if a particular goal is clearly defined for funding. Extension is all about practical application of information. In what ways does FSP SC want to engage in this?*

*do close out pre/post survey for every meeting - make this data available.*

*Make contact with Mike Osterholm or Craig Hedberg to see if they have any idea how we can reach a larger audience from academia. We need to have information that would be valuable to academia.*

#### **Theme: Recruit additional groups/individuals for engagement**

*Propose collaborative applied research projects. Connect with climate change and sustainability researchers in academia. Connect with business experts in academia.*

*UMN Extension is our traditional partner, and continues involvement on the Steering Committee. Are there other academic institutions or other areas at the U we could consider tapping for a role? Should we look at other public or private institutes of higher ed for involvement on the Steering Committee? Is there a "market" with undergraduate students to participate in FSP meetings? (Do we have something to offer them/do they have something to offer us?)*

*Work with U of M Extension staff as well as schools that have public health and environmental health programs.*

### 3. What ideas do you have to improve and expand our engagement with the general public?

**Main ideas:** Use social media to deliver and amplify timely messages. Target education and outreach toward specific audiences. Limit the length and complexity of content, focusing on how information is relevant to daily life.

### Theme: Focus on emerging trends

*I have come to appreciate that the general public focuses on what's meaningful and in a specific context. Getting to know the public, what is trending, and seeking to find out what the public considers important is invaluable. What we often assume to be a concern or opportunity doesn't always translate, and at worst, may be irrelevant.*

### Theme: Improve delivery methods to better meet audience needs

*Social media seems like a good way to promote engagement with the general public...not thinking of any more details on this topic right now.*

*Use social media to distribute food safety messages.*

*Keep meetings/learnings at an hour or less and single topics. Make connect between home practices and illness prevention. provide tools that general public can use to better understand/shape their expectations of industry and will help them in their roles as volunteers and large community events.*

*We need to know who we want to reach. Information may need to be targeted to the audience. We need to figure out how are information is valuable to each audience. We may need to have the sessions in such a way it is only for one of the audiences.*

### Theme: Recruit additional groups/individuals for engagement

*Find more consumer members for the Steering committee. Connect with food allergy advocates and nutrition advocates who represent consumers.*

## Meeting number and length

### 4. How many fully virtual (e.g., Webex) meetings do you think the FSP SC should plan and conduct each year?

**Main ideas:** Four of eight respondents indicated they think FSP SC should plan and conduct two meetings per year. Three respondents indicated three meetings per year, and one indicated one meeting per year.

### 4. How many fully virtual (e.g., Webex) meetings do you think the FSP SC should plan and conduct each year?

[More Details](#)

● 1	1
● 2	4
● 3	3



## 5. How long should fully virtual (e.g., Webex) FSP meetings be?

**Main ideas:** Four respondents indicated that fully virtual FSP meetings should be 1.5 hours long. Three respondents indicated two hours, and one indicated one hour.

5. How long should fully virtual (e.g., Webex) FSP meetings be?

[More Details](#)

● 1 hour	1
● 1.5 hours	4
● 2 hours	3
● 2.5 hours	0



## Topic ideas

**Main ideas:** [Engagement ideas](#) also contains suggestions relevant to identifying topics.

## 6. What topic or topics should be included in future PWDU-FSP Update newsletters?

**Main ideas:** Respondents suggested specific topics, such as organics, climate and sustainability, edibles, and *Listeria*. Respondents also gave general suggestions, such as general announcements, “hot topics,” emerging trends, and regulatory updates.

### Climate and sustainability

*Organic Foods and Food Safety, Intersection between food safety and climate change or sustainability.*

### General announcements

*Topics have been mostly business/regulatory focused, and that seems appropriate. Rules in Brief, Outbreak stories, Resources, Announcements (trainings, new resources, opportunities to get engaged).*

*Current outreach efforts, emerging trends, regulatory updates (as needed)*

### Hot topics

*Current food safety related "hot topics", anything new that readers should be aware of*

*TCH edibles*



## STEERING COMMITTEE SURVEY SUMMARY

*A discussion on the prevalence and danger of listeria that seems to be continuing to rise and what is being done to resolve it.*

### 7. What topic or topics should be included in future PWDU-FSP social media posts?

**Main ideas:** Respondents suggested specific topics, such as food preservation, edibles, and *Listeria*. Respondents also gave general suggestions, such as general food safety messaging, updates from the Food Innovation Group and creating non-English language posts.

#### Alternative formats (language, graphics, etc.)

*Posts in Somali, Spanish, Hmong, Arabic, etc.*

#### Emerging trends

*Updates from the Food Innovation Group.*

#### Hot topics

*Time-relevant topics such as holiday food safety, official "days," etc. Look at the MDH social media metrics to see which posts have best engagement.*

*I think with an increase in home-based food preservation during the COVID season, sending out related information may be helpful. E.g. canning, making jams/jellies*

*food safety messages - hand hygiene, cooking, cooling, don't prepare food when sick use the food safety messaging that is used for Food Safety Education Month - Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill*

*TCH edibles*

*A discussion on the prevalence and danger of listeria that seems to be continuing to rise and what is being done to resolve it.*

### 8. What needs do you know about which could be addressed through an FSP statewide food safety initiative?

**Main ideas:** Responses suggest a need for more effective graphics on key food safety topics (e.g., cooling) and recommend a focus on advancing health equity.

#### Alternative formats (language, graphics, etc.)

*need to make sure the information is presented in a manner that is best received by those we are intending to read the messages, such as foodservice workers.*

## STEERING COMMITTEE SURVEY SUMMARY

*cooling foods - better visuals on why it's a problem*

### Health equity

*Advancing health equity within the food regulatory system and food system in general.*

### Requirements

*One of the advantages of Covid was the greater emphasis on handwashing which seems to have been of value. I'm not sure if there are many FBI from leftovers but proper handling of leftovers is a good food safety initiative for the general public, it may be of some value for restaurants that have product that is not discarded but used in another menu item, such as leftover chicken and chicken salad*

### Skills and resources contributions

**Main ideas:** Offers of assistance were limited, indicating that the Steering Committee is unable to undertake a statewide food safety initiative.

#### 9. What skills and resources could you contribute to a statewide food safety initiative sponsored by FSP?

*None at this time, possibly later after I learn more about my new job.*

*Coordination, project management, documentation, promotion*

*A technical background (biochemistry and microbial food safety) and several certifications in food safety (SQF, Post-Farm Gate, PCQI, HACCP, Food Defense - vulnerability assessment/intentional adulteration); + practical applications (currently - food safety specialist with UMN Extension).*

### Food Safety Partnership Steering Committee Contacts

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