

Food Hubs and Food Safety

Welcome and Thanks for Joining the Webinar

November 18, 2016

The NECAFS Project Team

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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

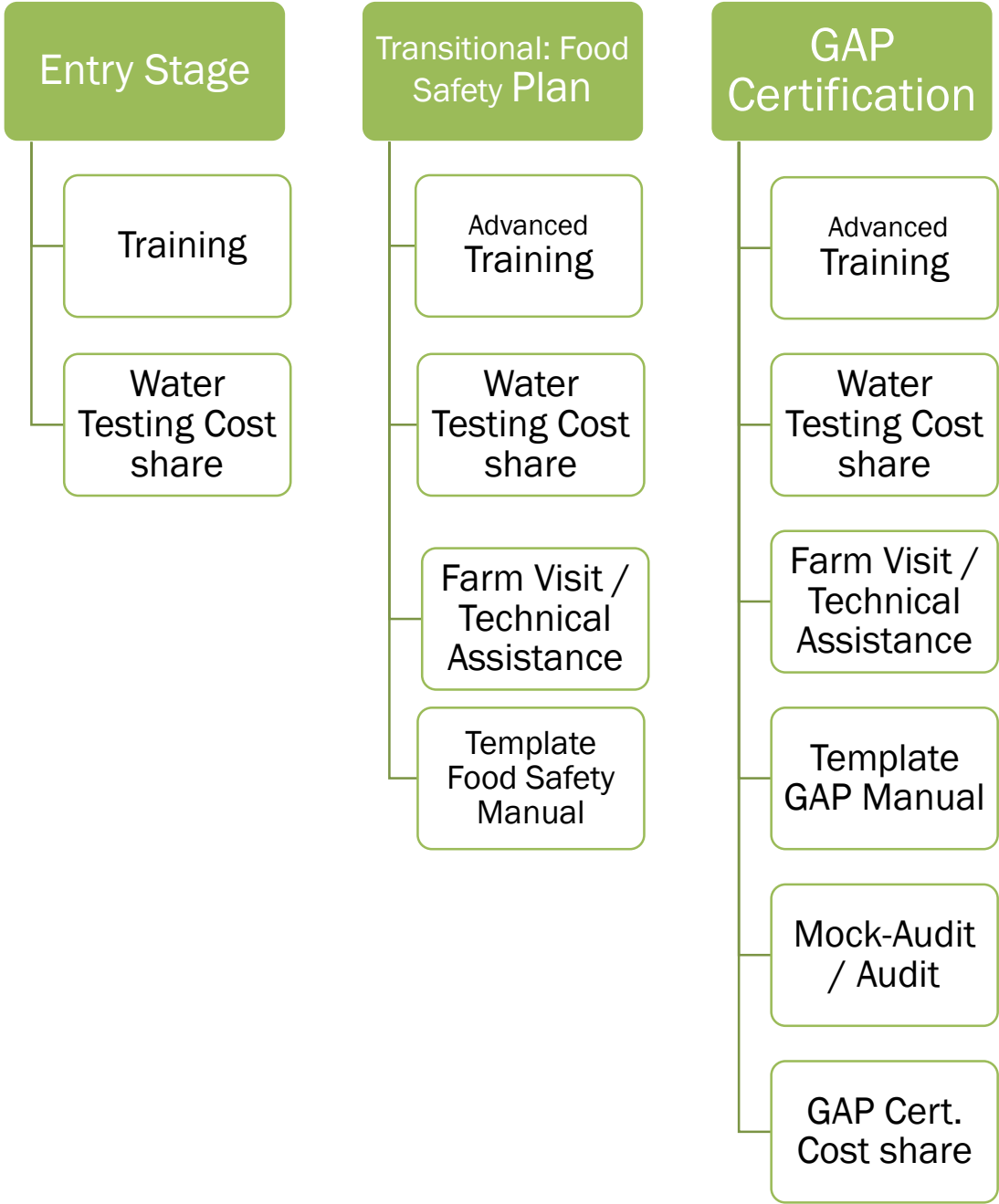
- 3000 sq ft GHP-certified warehouse
- 3 refrigerated vehicles
- 75 partner farms & producers
- 200+ customers: institutions, retailers, restaurants, distributors
- Fresh produce, meat, eggs, cheese, value-added





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

Adrianna Vargo, Director of Grower Services
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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.

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

**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.



CRAVINGBOSTON 

CHOW 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



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.



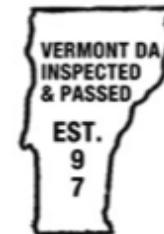
Mad River Food Hub offers:

- **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!

Please help us improve by completing this short survey:

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