



IDAHO-OREGON FRUIT AND VEGETABLE ASSOCIATION

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To: IOFVASN Industry Affairs Committee

From: Candi Fitch

Date: August 1, 2017

Subject: 2017 Center for Produce Safety (CPS) Research Symposium

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the recent CPS Research Symposium. The event was interesting and educational; this year's symposium was held in Denver, Colorado, on June 20 and 21, 2017, at the Hyatt Regency Denver Tech Center Hotel. Attached you will find the symposium agenda, the list of attendees, the summaries of the research discussed during the General Session, and copies of the summaries for the Poster Sessions.

This marked the Tenth Anniversary of the Center for Produce Safety. There was conversation about when the organization was formed, where they are now, and where they are growing. When the organization was formed in 2007, the founding groups felt something more needed to be done. Some of the discussion included in 2005-2006 were GAP programs for the fields; HACCP was in the processing facilities. It was pointed out ten years ago the focus was on audits and not on science, and participation was buyer driven. There were food safety recalls and outbreaks, but the industry has the feeling those happen to the other guy. The industry had some high profile incidents with spring mix and green onions, just to name a couple. They called the 2006 Spinach recall a watershed moment. At that time there was little data and research to help with the situation. That was when a few industry giants stepped up and funded the Center for Produce Safety. To date there has been \$20,000,000 invested, funding 120 projects at 124 institutions, and in 5 countries. CPS understands the need to connect researchers with industry.

Samir Assar, US Food and Drug Administration sat in on a couple of panels, and when they were talking about the 10 year anniversary and the beginning of the research Samir had some interesting comments. Samir commented that it was a way to start the process, looking at the most robust science and how it played out. The science is then applied to the rule, recognizing that it is not going to be the final answer. He commented without the science there is no rule, and that the science is critical for the guidance documents. Samir continued by saying if you don't have the science you don't have the rule.

During the Symposium they also have what they call Lightning Session where the researchers who are included in the Poster Session each have five minutes to discuss their project, or projects, on the posters.

This year they talked about FSMA Methods for Testing Agriculture Water – a CPS Colloquium that was formed, and it included a panel of regulators, public scientists, and industry representatives. The Colloquium was designed to offer recommendations to both FDA and industry that would address concerns. A copy of the Colloquium report is included with this report. There was considerable discussion about water testing method 1603. They commented that it was very expensive and few labs could offer the testing, and that there needed to be additional options available.

Samir talked about the delay in the requirements, and that a Federal Register Notice would be issued shortly. He added that they still want to educate before they regulate. They are not looking at pulling out the regulatory hammer, and don't have expectations that everyone will be in compliance. Samir added that the recommendations from the Colloquium would be strongly considered.

The Governor of Colorado spoke at the meeting, and covered the agriculture industry of Colorado. He told the group that Colorado had 34,000 farmers and ranchers, and they offered a great economical contribution to the state. He added that the Colorado Proud program had 2,300 members. He talked about the importance of food safety.

This year they also included four "Stakeholder Sessions", one for growers, one for packing, one for processing and one for buyers.

Last year at the symposium it was mentioned the need for equipment manufacturers to start developing packinglines that are easier to sanitize. That same comment was made again at this year's symposium. It was mentioned during the final discussions that the group would like to see more retailers and equipment manufacturers involved with CPS and attend the symposium.

I think the event was very worthwhile.

Thank you.

Center for Produce Safety Web Site:

<http://www.centerforproducesafety.org/>

2017 Research Symposium Program: <http://www.centerforproducesafety.org/resources.php>