

# GAPs Food Safety Plan Curriculum Development

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CSU Meeting Notes

**October 9, 2012**

Meeting notes with CSU representatives to discuss a potential collaborative partnership in developing accurate, science-based GAPs Food Safety Plan curriculum relevant to vegetable and fruit growers.



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*Our vision: Together with the communities we serve, we are working to make Weld County the healthiest place to live, learn, work and play.*

Science-based GAPs Food Safety Plan Training/Curriculum Development  
CSU Meeting Notes October 9, 2012

Meeting with CSU – Marisa Bunning, Martha Sullins and Extension Office Weld County Director Keith Maxey, Pam Smith representing Healthy Weld 2020.

CSU was very excited about our proposal and Pam offered that Healthy Weld 2020's training would dovetail with their Western Center for Risk Management grant Letter of Intent to apply (see below). They were receptive to that.

**CSU Background** - CSU funds come from State of Colorado, and fund extension agents – several years ago with State budget cuts, Extension lost positions that have never been replaced. Healthy Weld 2020 teaching this food safety class would not put a burden on already tight staff and budgets. Interestingly, even though Weld is a top agricultural production county – in the top 10 nationwide, and larger than 14 other agricultural states, they have no agronomy Extension Agent on staff since the previous one retired (approximately 2003 per Keith). What this means is the Board of County Commissioners would probably really like this idea because it's a resource for Weld's producers where technical services are lacking. This is also why Keith can really get behind this, even though it's out of his realm of expertise, which is livestock and dairy.

**Weld's Food Safety Program** - Pam emphasized that Healthy Weld 2020 was not expecting CSU to teach this curriculum, but that they were wanting to partner with CSU for assistance and guidance in developing science-based curriculum (as needed) and more importantly, to review the curriculum to make sure it was science-based, sound teaching that would accurately inform producers. With the multiple food safety activities taking place, Healthy Weld 2020 realizes the importance of presenting accurate information that doesn't confuse or mislead producers.

Various areas pertaining to curriculum structure was discussed –

- Peer to peer presentations on farm food safety topics from a perspective that producers can relate to (probably dinner presentations, before each course is taught);
- Experiential learning opportunities to help producers buy into the concepts, and understand how to identify and mitigate the risks on their farm;
- Winter season timeframe – Marisa and Martha both thought that was a good time (Pam explained the Cultivation Event challenges, which was daytime), although Fall season, evening-time classes are also possible (ex. Boulder Beginning Farmer Program);

- Certificate of Completion – for attending 6 of 8 courses, and completing the Food Safety Plan section for each topic. Martha and Marisa both thought we should offer one. It may have unintended value we can't foresee at the moment. It would demonstrate their having gained an in-depth understanding of farm food safety issues. (this happened with the Boulder Beginning Farmer COC)
- There should be a charge for the course – it adds value, producers are more likely to be seriously interested in attending...IDEA: maybe Healthy Weld 2020 charges and gives the money back as a stipend for completion. Getting people used to paying for this would help in sustainability in the future, since it could offset costs (ideas Martha, Marisa and Keith all agreed on)

#### **Potential CSU Contribution**

- Approaching the instructor for the Delivery of Extension Programs spring 2013 course about developing preliminary experiential learning exercises for each topic. This would include supply lists, costs, and instructions on how to teach the exercise. Experiential learning exercises are important because people learn and retain information differently. Experiential learning exercises make learning fun, reinforce learning objectives through hands on activity, helps improve retention and impacts behavior and attitudes about what's being taught, in this case food safety. The last one is really important, because producers many times have 'It can't happen to me' attitudes.
- Provide resources to help Healthy Weld 2020 develop curriculum - they already have
- Arrange a meeting with Gretchen Wall, Cornell Produce Safety Alliance Program Coordinator, to help provide insight/direction/assistance into developing the curriculum. Gretchen will be in Fort Collins February 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Would allow the use of CSU logo as partner in curriculum development, assistance with Certificate of Completion language that conveyed correct message – disclaimer that covers liability issues for CSU and limitations of training (that CSU and Healthy Weld 2020 didn't write the Food Safety Plan for X Producer...etc)
- Review of curriculum for accuracy

**Grant Application talking points** – Martha and Marisa were very helpful in giving us talking points for the grant:

- This is a unique, groundbreaking pilot program to assist producers in a highly productive agriculture county that will likely have expanded training opportunities throughout the state
- Quote the statistics - # lawsuits against Jensen Farms vs. the # cantaloupes sold – I'd have to look this up, and
- The risk populations affected by contaminated produce/food
- CSU offered to write a support letter if we wanted.

We talked about the various food safety things going on in the state:

- **CSU sent grant application Letter of Intent** to Western Center for Risk Management Education for producer food safety training similar to Weld's proposed training, with the addition of producer anticipated costs for implementing Food Safety protocols on their farm (ie, annual projected costs of items like: gloves, sanitizer, water bacteriological testing fees, etc in addition to 1-time capital costs for equipment). This would also calculate the estimated cost of employee time for training,

implementing food safety protocols (recordkeeping, etc). This grant is USDA funds dispersed through Western Center...Funds availability would be July 2013 – June 2014 if they awarded a grant.

- CSU planning an on farm Food Safety Field Day late April 2013 hosted by Berry Patch Farms. It will be a tour/discussion of various farm practices and possibly alternative solutions to improve food safety.
- Colorado Big and Small Conference 2013 – Martha is doing a Traceability presentation, and there are other presentations as well.