Governance and Structure

The Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) is a broad-based group consisting of key industry, academia and government stakeholders. The Alliance seeks to develop an industry-oriented food safety training program to help firms producing human and animal food for the U.S. market to comply with Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) legislation based regulations.

The FSPCA will: (1) develop learning objectives and a standardized curriculum for industry training and delivery modules; (2) develop technical training material useful to small- and medium-sized businesses; (3) create training materials pertaining to a specific commodity/industry sector dealing with human and animal foods; and (4) provide useful input to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding guidance for food hazard analysis and preventive controls. The Alliance is supported by a grant from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) awarded to Illinois Institute of Technology's Institute for Food Safety and Health (IIT IFSH).

Mission

The mission of FSPCA is to support safe food production for the U.S. market by developing a core curriculum and corresponding technical educational materials about food safety risk-reduction preventive controls that comply with the relevant federal regulations. The Alliance will develop materials for a variety of delivery modes, including classroom-based face-to-face, hands-on and distance-learning modules and hybrid mechanisms of delivery of the training to the industry.

Scope, Objective and Roles of the Alliance

Scope. The scope of the FSPCA is to develop hazard analysis and food safety preventive controls training programs for FDA-regulated foods, including food for human consumption, animal feeds and pet foods. The Alliance will focus on all major food commodities/sectors with the exception of those excluded by the FSMA preventive controls regulations.

The standardized, evidence-based training curriculum will include appropriate best practices and technical resources pertaining to conducting hazard analyses and implementing preventive controls for the food industry, with emphasis on small and medium-sized companies. The Food Safety Preventive Controls curriculum and training modules will be made available online to all who wish to use it as a basis for training.

Objective. The main objective of the FSPCA is to develop, deliver and facilitate a food safety preventive controls training curriculum and modules, including train-the-trainer courses for food industry personnel and state and federal regulators. The Alliance will consider additional objectives and activities subject to availability of resources.

Roles. The fundamental roles of the Alliance are to:
• Serve as the network hub for a comprehensive preventive controls knowledge database.
• Assist FDA in disseminating the scientific and technical elements relevant to the hazard analysis and preventive controls aspects of federal regulations to the food industry.
• Serve as a bridge between FDA and food companies to communicate technical elements of preventive controls regulations.
• Develop example control models for major industry sectors.
• Provide scientific interpretation of hazard analysis and preventive controls for major industry sectors.
• Help provide guidance for preventive controls for the food industry.

Organization and Structure

The organizational components of the FSPCA are the Organizing Committee (now dissolved), the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee, and several task-, commodity- or sector-specific subcommittees and working groups. The Alliance is managed by the FSPCA Coordinator, who is aided by the Executive Committee and Steering Committee in preparing, editing and organizing documents and training materials.

Organizing Committee

The Organizing Committee consists of invited members from key stakeholder groups and ad-hoc advisory bodies who volunteered to serve as the initial development team charged with establishing the scope, mission and governance structure of the Alliance. With finalization of its mission and the establishment of the Executive and Steering Committees, the Organizing Committee is now dissolved.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of not more than five members of the Steering Committee, including the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Steering Committee, and three members representing the government, academia and industry trade organizations. The Alliance Coordinator serves as an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee works to ensure the strategic direction of the Alliance, maintain budgetary compliance, coordinate the filling of vacancies on the Steering Committee as needed, coordinate formation of Working Groups and appointments of volunteers to Working Groups in consultation with the Alliance Steering Committee, and develop plans for continuation of the Alliance.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is assembled by the Alliance Coordinator in consultation with the Organizing Committee. The Steering Committee consists of representatives from IIT IFSH, FDA, federal and state officials associations, academia, food industry trade and other relevant organizations. The main function of the Steering Committee is to carry out specific tasks and activities of the Alliance to fulfill its mission. The Steering Committee will help identify the training needs and commodity- or sector-specific materials and resources that may be adapted or adopted by the Alliance in fulfilling its mission, and in drafting training modules and units. At minimum, one Steering Committee member will serve as a liaison on each Working Group.
Executive and Steering Committee Term Limits

The Executive Committee members, and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee, will serve a three-year staggered term (with possibility of reappointment). Term limits for Committee appointment (Executive Committee/Steering Committee and all Chair and Vice Chair positions in various FSPCA committees and working groups) will be set up in such a way to ensure continuity and with possibility of reappointment.

Subcommittees and Working Groups

FSPCA Subcommittees and Working Groups will be formed as deemed necessary by the Steering Committee and will consist of members nominated by (or appointed in consultation with) the Steering Committee. The main function of Subcommittees and Working Groups is to collate and organize technical inputs from FDA and Alliance members and to develop industry-specific food safety preventive controls guidance under the direction of the Steering Committee.

Alliance Rules and Communication

Rules. FSPCA business will be conducted by conference calls and occasional face-to-face meetings to review project progress and refine project objectives as necessary. Periodic (biweekly or monthly) phone teleconferences/web meetings will be organized to track the progress of assignments in between the face-to-face meetings as necessary. FSPCA meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order or other specific rules established by the Alliance Coordinator. Any change in the objectives and scope the Alliance will be defined and agreed upon by the Steering Committee.

Communications. A web-based file system will be established to facilitate a central document and database resources for all Alliance members. Web pages for information on Alliance will be developed and accessible via IIT IFSH and other web links as a part of the electronic portal at IIT IFSH.

Alliance Membership

The Alliance members will include senior members from the key stakeholder organizations representing food industry association, regulators and extension educators, including the IIT IFSH, FDA (including Office of Regulatory Affairs University [ORAU] to ensure consistency between industry and regulatory training), USDA, National Institute for Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA Cooperative Extension Service), Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), International Food Protection Training Institute (IFPTI), Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA), American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI), United Fresh Produce Association, Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN), National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA), American Feed Industry Association (AFIA), The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), selected universities such as University of Georgia, University of California-Davis, University of Wisconsin, Rutgers University, North Carolina State University, and international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and World Bank. Additional members from human and animal food industry companies, professional organizations and other relevant stakeholders will be added as necessary.