



**Washington State
Department of
Agriculture**

Food Safety & Consumer Services Division Annual Report January – December 2014



The Food Safety & Consumer Services Division serves the needs of the agricultural community, consumers and stakeholders through the state of Washington by delivering excellent customer service at every level of the division while providing each team member of our programs with the tools and training necessary to be successful.

**Kirk Robinson,
Assistant Director**

March 9, 2015

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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March 1, 2015

Dear Director Hoover:

It is my pleasure to present our Annual Report for the Food Safety & Consumer Services Division. This report provides an overview of the accomplishments achieved and activities conducted by our programs in 2014. Defending the safety, integrity and availability of our food system is the core purpose of who we are and what we do.

With over 160,000 Washingtonians employed in the agricultural industry and with 13% of our state's economy supported by agriculture the work conducted by Food Safety and Consumer Services Division is key to supporting an enormous industry in our state. Each program and team member in our division places a high value on customer satisfaction and the people we serve.

Our successes continued to be attributed to our emphasis on collaboration and consultation with our customers and stakeholders. Involvement and feedback from our stakeholders is a key factor in the decisions we make each day whether it involves redesigning a license application or developing proposed legislation.

Equally important are each of our 114 team members and the acknowledgement of their work and dedication ensuring the safety, integrity and availability of food grown and produced in our state. Their work is fundamental to the long term success and growth of Washington's agricultural community.

The implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act continues to be a top priority for our Division as these new federal standards for food safety are implemented. Our future work in providing customers and stakeholders with education and outreach on these far reaching food safety standards will be fundamental to the successful implementation for our farmers and food processors.

Our agency continues to play a significant role in supporting efforts to reduce childhood obesity and providing access to healthy foods in our schools and to low income families across Washington. Our work around food security will continue to grow emphasizing even more the important work conducted by our Food Assistance Program and Farm to School activities. This work will not only generate new markets for our farmers but will provide the foundation for healthier Washingtonians throughout our state.

As we embark on 2015, our team is committed to working in partnership with the agricultural community, other agencies and Washingtonians to advance the success and prosperity of our agriculture community.

Respectfully submitted,

Kirk Robinson

Kirk Robinson, Assistant Director
Food Safety & Consumer Services - Washington State Department of Agriculture

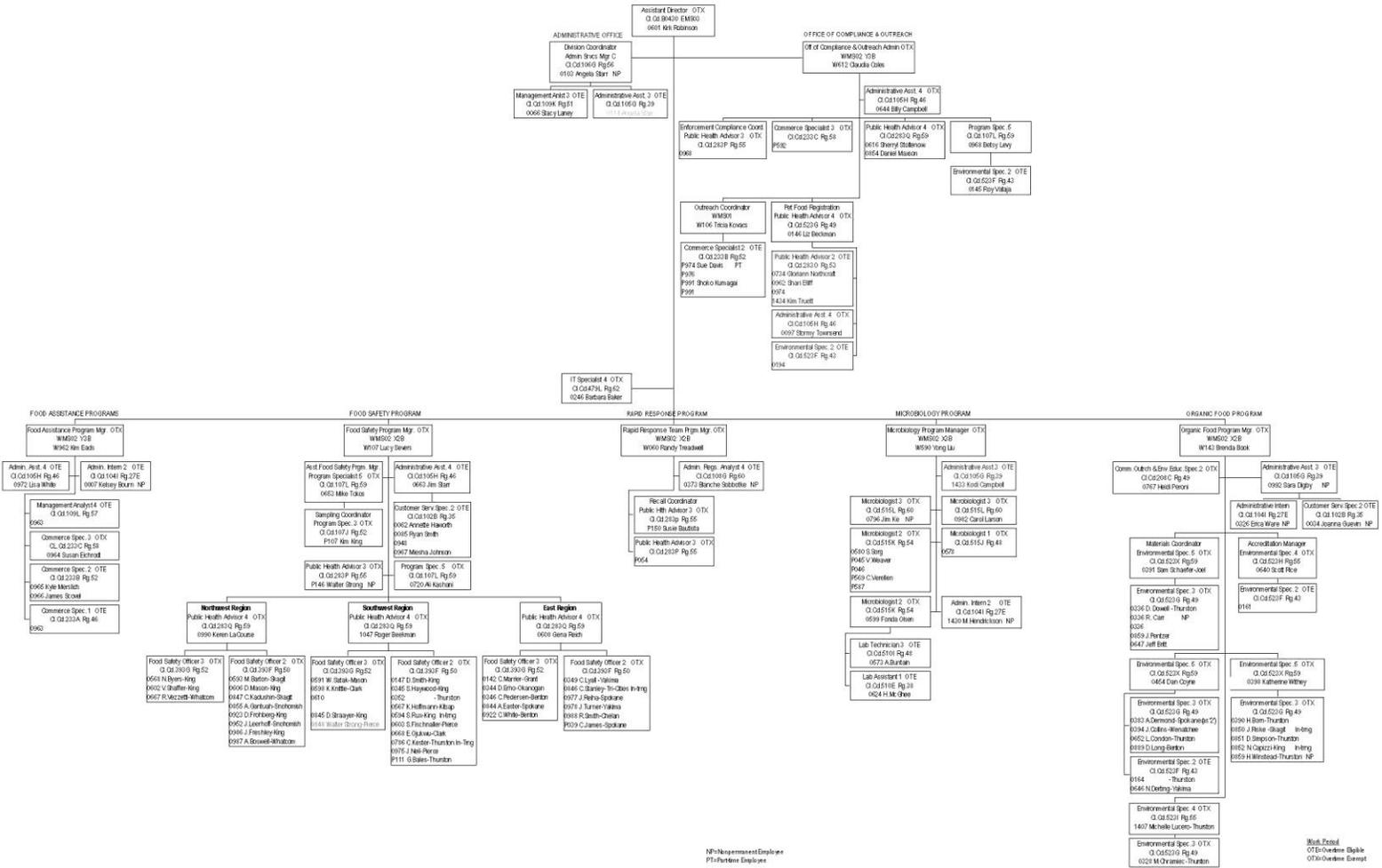


FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION

Organizational Chart, January 2015

FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION

February 2015



Food Safety & Consumer Services Division
“At-a-Glance”

January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014

Prepared by Barbara Baker, Business Analyst

Number of Licensees / Certification / Registration:

✓ **Food Safety – 5,274**

Food Processors – 2,253	Warehouses – 797	Dairy Plants – 116	Dairy Farms – 502
Egg Handlers/ Dealers – 845	Custom Meat – 137	Special Poultry – 17	Dairy Technicians – 607

✓ **Certified Organic Operations – 1,090**

Producers (crop & livestock farms) – 717	Processors – 210
Handlers – 149	Retailers – 14
Products in Materials Registration Database – 795	

✓ **Commercial Feed Licenses – 662**

✓ **Pet Foods Registrations – 4,835 Products Registered, 5,165 Products Pending Approval**

✓ **Complaints – 76**

Food Safety Consumer Complaints – 52	Consumer Complaints about a Certified Organic Operation – 20	Food Safety Industry Complaints about Inspections – 4
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✓ **Sanitary Certificates Issued – 4,938**

✓ **Cottage Food Permits – 88**

✓ **Inspections – 5,121**

Organic Program – 1,175	Milk Tankers – 384
Eggs – 481	Marijuana Infused Edibles (MIE) – 27
USDA Country of Origin Labeling Audits – 112	FDA Contract Audits – 30
Food Processors / Warehouses / Dairy Plants / Dairy Farms / Custom Meat – 2,912	

✓ **Local Food Banks/Pantries/Meal Programs/Tribes served by the Food Assistance Program –**

- ~500 representing 8,946,352 individual client visits

✓ **Microbiology Lab –**

- Samples tested by the Microbiology Laboratory – 6,006
- Tests run by the Microbiology Laboratory – 15,250

Dairy – 9,527	Feed – 234
Food – 4,789	FERN Project – 700

✓ **Food Recalls – 24**

Class 1 – 12	Class 2 – 11	Class 3 – 1
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✓ **Compliance Activities – 533**

Food–Notice of Correction (NOC) – 523	Food–Notice of Intent (NOI) – 10
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✓ **Education and Outreach Resources – 26**

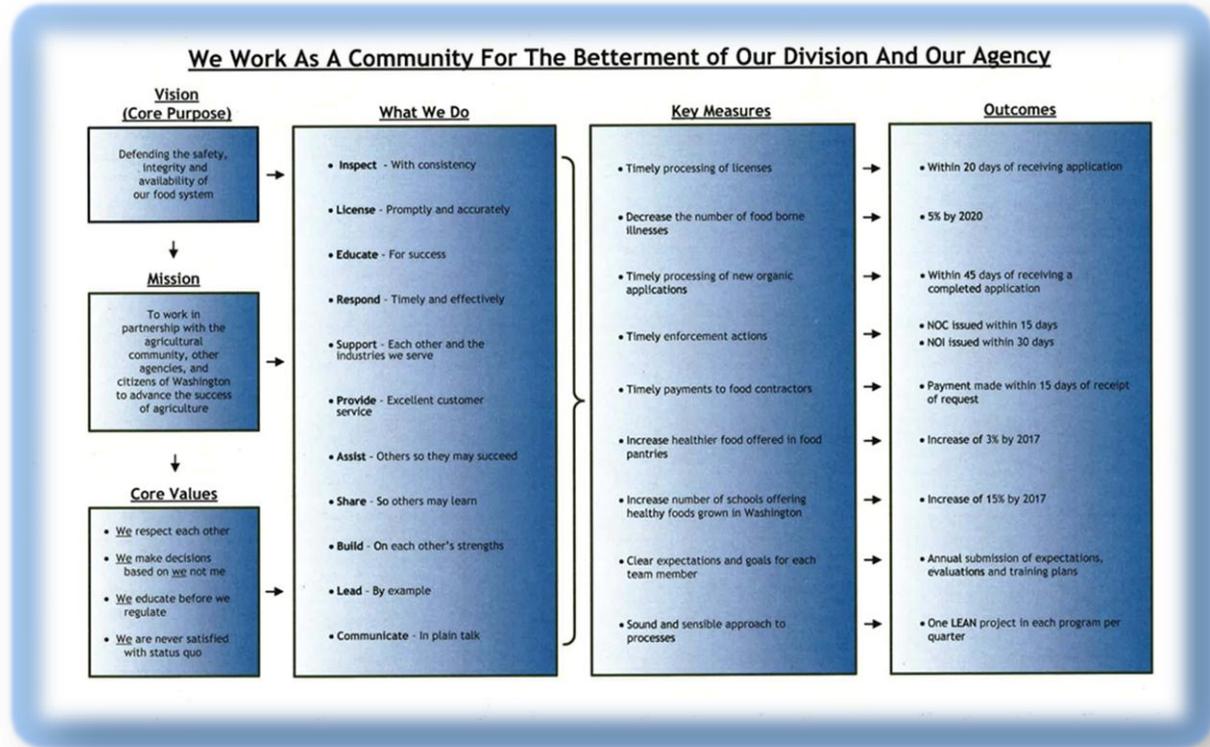
✓ **Regulatory Assistance Workshops – 8**

✓ **Farm to School Tours – 1**

✓ **Outreach Resources – 22**

Food Safety & Consumer Services Division

Vision, Mission and Core Values





FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Administrative Services

Barbara Baker, Business Analyst

Core Functions and Services

- Barbara Baker has been the Business Analyst within the Food Safety & Consumer Services Division, Administration Unit since the position was established in July, 2013. Her major role within the Division is to work with the Programs to identify unmet data needs and interface with WSDA IT staff to explore and implement solutions.

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- The new Food Safety Program data system, Food Record Electronic Database (FRED), went live in early-September. This system replaced numerous database applications and Excel spreadsheets used by the Food Safety Program to record and track their data, as well as produce licenses and regulatory reports. Although all the data from previous systems could not be imported, it was possible to import data extracts with minimal information about the Program's licensees. A systematic plan was developed for adding the historical information into FRED. By the end of the year, nearly 80% of this data had been entered into FRED.
- Future additions to FRED's functionality have been prioritized by Managers of the Programs utilizing FRED to conduct their Program's business. The application developer is currently working on Tier 1 projects, such as automating license renewals and automating imports of dairy testing results from Industry Dairy Laboratories.
- Worked with the Food Safety Program Manager to develop a custom report in PISCES using Food Safety Program staff's use of sub-categories, when recording their time in PISCES and into the Fund Codes used by the Program. This report is important for the Program Manager to compare the breakdown of how staff are funded for payroll purposes, with where the Program's actual work occurred by Fund Code. This provides data to modify staffing workplans or funding, as needed.
- Completed work that began in 2013 to use the Microbiology Laboratory's Laboratory Information Management System, X-LIMS, to produce a regulatory report for Dairy Plants. The Microbiology Laboratory conducts the regulatory tests on dairy and water samples needed for FDA check ratings. In the past, data on the printed reports from X-LIMS were reentered into Excel spreadsheets for each dairy plant. These ledgers needed to have at least two years of data for each of the product types a plant produced. X-LIMS became operational in October, 2012, so more than two years of historical data is now currently available. The path to implementing this report required that all dairy product descriptions now reflect their butterfat levels, rather than names. This Lean Project is not only a huge savings in staff time, but the chance of data entry error when data is reentered from the hard-copy reports to an Excel spreadsheet is eliminated. In addition, this report is useful for showing test trends and for tracking out-of-compliance test results.
- Worked on a project with a developer working for the Microbiology Laboratory LIMS vendor, the Food Safety Sampling Coordinator and one of the Food Safety Officers proficient in developing PDF fillable forms. Two fillable forms have been developed, one for dairy products and another for environmental sampling. Once implemented, a FSO will complete the form in the field and then email it to the LIMS. The LIMS will then automatically start a chain-of-custody, assign sample numbers, and populate the LIMS with information about the samples (e.g., product type, temperature at pick-up, etc.), thus eliminating much of the data entry required at the Microbiology Laboratory when samples arrive. This project is in the testing phase in the field by a handful of field staff, and is planned to be implemented in March, 2015.



FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Administrative Services

Barbara Baker, Business Analyst

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- The animal feed activities administered by the Office of Compliance and Outreach, such as licensing of commercial feed, pet food registration and inspection fee reporting need a single information system to support these activities. Currently, staff need to use four separate applications to accomplish their work. A decision was made to purchase a new information system rather than use internal WSDA to build the system. Once business process flow documents and system requirements were developed for all of their Feed processing needs in mid-December a RFP was issued. It is hoped the contract will be finalized in March 2015 and a new system will be configured, tested and implemented by June 2016. Barbara will continue to be involved with this contract as the contract manager.
- During late-2013 and early-2014 the Microbiology Laboratory identified a list of enhancements they needed for their Laboratory Information Management System, X-LIMS. Once the list was finalized by the Laboratory Manager, X-LIMS's vendor completed the tasks. Before putting these changes into the production system they needed to be tested to ensure the changes worked and did not affect other areas of the application. These were completed by the end of 2014.

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- Continue working with the Microbiology Lab to optimize their LIMS.
- Continue working with the Food Safety Program to assist with adding critical functionality to FRED, particularly as this information system becomes a shared repository of information needed by multiple Program areas.
- Continue working on getting a new Feed information system implemented.
- Continue to look for ways to convert as much of the Division's business from paper-based to electronic.

Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

- The primary role of the Business Analyst is to work directly with the program staff within the Division, determine unmet data needs, and interface with WSDA IT staff to explore and implement solutions. Identifying and satisfying data needs will enable the Division to capture accurate and relevant information enabling us to make better, data-driven decisions and to provide more accurate reports to internal and external stakeholders.

LEAN Update

- The project that developed a ledger report for dairy plants, discussed above in the key accomplishments section, is an example of a Lean Project completed this year. This project crossed two Programs areas within the Division, the Food Safety Program and the Microbiology Laboratory.

FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Administrative Services

Allison Alderman, Division Coordinator (January-October 2014)

Angela Starr, Acting Division Coordinator (October-December 2014)



Core Functions and Services

- The Food Safety & Consumer Services (FSCS) Division administrative staff enables the program leadership and staff to execute their missions in an efficient and effective manner.
- The Division Coordinator provides executive and programmatic support for the Assistant Director of the Food Safety & Consumer Services (FSCS) Division which encompasses approximately 145 FTEs and is the single point for coordination between Agency Operations and the Division's programs. This position provides support to Division staff for human resources issues and has delegated authority over an FSCS annual budget of \$30.0 million.
- The Information Technology Specialists and Administrative Assistant provide for continuity and consistency across all the programs/offices for functions such as: telecommunications; computer software and hardware procurement, deployment and maintenance; network and web page maintenance; public disclosure requests; conference and travel arrangements and TEMS; purchasing, receivables and payables; fleet management; mail, supplies, and equipment; and the administration of the time, attendance and leave program.

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Worked through and resolved several issues on the computerized timekeeping program pilot "PISCES" and decentralized portions to the program administrative personnel so that the data being entered into and paperwork generated out of the system is closer to where the actions are actually occurring.
- Established limited and secure access files on our Division network site and implemented electronic filing protocols. 100% of 2014 Division level documents related to position establishments/updates, hiring processes, evaluating, payroll, general administrative and terminations are filed electronically. This new process eliminated the need to use valuable space for filing hard copies, and has also saved countless hours in copying, filing, retrieving, and distributing documents as well as saves on postage costs.
- The Division 'R' drive was partially cleaned up. Obsolete/outdated files and folders were purged. A standard naming convention for all human resources related documents is complete and work continues to agree upon and finalize standard naming conventions for common document types across the Division (i.e. inspections, certifications, renewals).
- We assisted records management staff in cleaning up the storage room downstairs and were able to dispose of six large dumpsters full of obsolete forms, records that were well beyond their retention life and other items that were unnecessarily taking up valuable space.
- Division Coordinator participated on multiple teams to identify customer requirements and complete business process flow maps for application and database upgrades. Additional detail regarding the new and/or enhanced applications is being provided in the appropriate program reports.
- Finished upgrading the entire fleet of computers from Windows XP to the latest version of Windows 7.
- We collaborated with IT on compiling an extensive list of IT needs and plans to implement over the next two years.
- We lead the Division in the processing of 54 public disclosure requests.

FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Administrative Services

Allison Alderman, Division Coordinator (January-October 2014)

Angela Starr, Acting Division Coordinator (October-December 2014)



Key Accomplishments for 2014

- The long time Administrative Assistant for the Division retired and a new Administrative Assistant was hired. A lot of work was done and we corrected multiple coding errors in the Pisces system and other billings, better ensuring the correct funding sources are used to pay bills.
- The IT section across the agency reorganized in October, 2014. Centralization of the unit resulted in supervision of one Information Technology Specialist 4 (ITS4) and one ITS2 being transferred away from the Division Coordinator. We believe this was a positive move for the Division and for the Agency.
- Also in October, 2014, a Management Analyst 3 was transferred from the Director's Office to the Food Safety Administration Program. Duties assigned to this position will enable us to complete significant and important tasks that we have wanted to accomplish but have not had the capacity to get to. We are excited about the work we are doing in this area.
- Personnel activity in the division during 2014:
 - Four agency internal transfers into the division
 - 14 newly hired employees
 - 121 employees currently in the division
 - We are also proud to report that we awarded the following Length of Service certificates:
 - ✓ 5 – 5 year certificates
 - ✓ 7 – 10 year certificates
 - ✓ 3 – 20 year certificates
 - ✓ 2 – 25 year certificates
 - ✓ 2 – 30 year certificates

Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

- Our partners include Division and other agency staff, other state agencies, retail businesses, a temporary staffing employment agency, and a local travel agency, to name a few. We are committed to making these relationships about efficient use of time and state resources.
- With the reorganization of the IT section, we will continue to ensure there is a cooperative and collaborative relationship, where open communication and customer service remains on the forefront.
- The Division Coordinator reached out to Lean managers in other agencies in order to learn from their experiences in developing lean programs within their agencies and we are utilizing their wisdom in developing the program within the Division. Agencies that have openly shared their expertise and experiences include the Employment Security Department, Labor & Industries, Department of Health, and the Department of Retirement Systems.



LEAN Update

- There is a continued need to streamline processes across programs. The Division Coordinator led a Lean/Kaizen Workshop where we evaluated the FDA contract billing process that was administered by two programs. As a result of the work accomplished by the team, which included value stream mapping the current state, brainstorming solutions and mapping out the desired future state, the project results in: the error rate reduction (accuracy up from 88.99% to 99.23%); Cycle time reduced by 28.4%; and touch time reduced by 42.2% (equivalent to 3.2 months of staff time). One goal of the project is to convert hundreds of customer files from paper to electronic form. Because of other priorities, the project was put on temporary hold. We are currently researching our best options for the process of scanning approximately 40 large file cabinets of files into our electronic database.
- The Division Coordinator developed a formal structure for the Division Lean Program. The structure includes a process for staff to submit lean project proposals and requests and a process where the Division Program Managers will evaluate, prioritize and approve projects that will move forward. The Division Coordinator and Division IT staff met with Lean professionals from the Department of Retirement systems and reviewed the SharePoint site they have in place for employees to submit project ideas. The intent is to develop a similar site at WSDA.



FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES
Food Assistance Program
Kim Eads, Program Manager



Core Functions and Services

- The Food Assistance Programs staff develops and issues program contracts and funding; provides oversight of contracts; collaborates with state and national advisory committees and coalitions; provides food ordering, warehousing and shipping logistics services for USDA commodities; participates in emergency management responses; provides food recall information; offers technical assistance and nutrition education information; monitors for state and federal compliance; and develops key partnerships and data-driven strategies to alleviate hunger and increase access to healthier food options available in the emergency food system while supporting the agricultural community.

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Provided over \$18.6 million in USDA food along with state and federal funding to lead contractors which in turn helped over 500 food banks, food pantries, and meal programs distribute 139.4 million pounds of food to low-income Washington families. A portion of these funds went to thirty-one tribes to issue food vouchers to their community members and, in a few cases, to support their own food pantries.
- One in five Washingtonians received food from food pantries that were supported with resources from WSDA. On average, each client visited a food pantry 6.5 times last year resulting in over 8.9 million visits.



FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Food Assistance Program

Kim Eads, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Stakeholders successfully lobbied for an additional \$ 800,000 (one-time funding only) for our state funded Emergency Food Assistance Program in SFY 2015. WSDA passed through 100% of these funds directly to local non-profit emergency food assistance providers and tribal organizations.
- Completed over 43 contractor and subcontractor compliance reviews.
- Received and issued over 562 truckloads of USDA food for distribution to lead contractors and logistic partners statewide. Over 128,000 families received this each month.
- Worked with the Food Assistance Programs Advisory Committee, housed within the Washington Food Coalition, to focus on further streamlining efforts and program improvements in conjunction with our contractors and partners.
- Developed strategies to support [Governor's Goal 4 - Metric 1.2.A](#), Healthy and Safe Communities – Fostering the health of Washingtonians from a healthy start to a safe and supported future focusing on increasing the percentage of healthier food options being offered to low-income children and families through food pantries, farmers markets, and meal programs by 5% from 2014 baseline by 2017. For the first time we will be able to assess how our collective efforts are impacting improvements in the availability of healthier food options. We worked closely with our Advisory Committee, stakeholders, and contractors to develop the concept and the reporting tools. The result of the baseline report shows what an incredible job the emergency food providers are already doing which statewide shows 83% of the food distributed is considered healthier.
- Conducted a national survey of TEFAP distribution practices with a 100% response rate from all 50 states which will guide changes in the next bid for the state level shipping and warehousing contract. This survey allowed us to identify states most similar to our own that we will conduct further in-depth interviews, develop a better understanding of other states best practices, and innovate or affirm our own practices based on factual information.
- Assisted the emergency food system by increasing partnerships with beef producers, dairy farmers and growers of all varieties of fruits and vegetables. Director Hover's continued support is instrumental in messaging the importance of agriculture's role in supporting these partnerships and helping families in need.
- Provided support for the first FRESH RESULTS Award which honors the work that farmers are doing to combat hunger and increasing the nutritional value of food coming into the food system. Nominations are submitted by local food pantries. Washington Food Coalition honored the winner at their annual conference and presented the winner with a plaque and a small monetary award to further these kinds of projects. The 2014 winner was Simple Gifts Farm.
- Provided additional support to external partner's pilot projects that documented the purchasing/donating process so that others could easily replicate it in their community. Limited funding was provided to purchase food from local farmers which increased the amount of healthier fresh foods coming into the emergency food system. You may view the 2014 Purchasing Pilot report [here](#).



FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Food Assistance Program

Kim Eads, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- For the first time, a section on small farms selling and donating to food banks was included in the WSDA Handbook for Small and Direct Marketing Farms.
- Participated in the Northwest Farmers Fighting Hunger June Event which resulted in 91,675 pounds of food going to families in need in Oregon and Washington as well as bringing awareness to the general public that hunger exists in their local community.
- Increased efforts on external communications by providing contractors and partners a quarterly WSDA FAP update, webinars, more frequent food distribution and ordering group conference calls, an improved website, updating materials for our vendor booth, and participating in seven conferences and events statewide.
- Internally, we prepared staff desk manuals and documented key internal processes which enabled us to provide sustainable quality customer service, improve our ability to adjust quickly when staffing changes occur and continue streamlining efforts.

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- Shifts in federal and state resources, increasing food prices and increasing client need will continue to impact the emergency food systems' ability to provide the needed levels of support for low-income clients within the community.
- Changes in federal regulations and OMB Super Circular 200 will require us to update our policies and procedures and provide additional contractor training. We will need to work with federal and state agencies to ensure that our program specific implementation guidelines are accurate.
- We continue to experience an increased rate of turnover in contractors and subcontractors. This creates additional challenges and workload for FAP staff as the new contractors need intensive training while they become familiar with the many requirements of the programs. We have also seen a large number of new local program and fiscal staff needing training and technical assistance, further impacting FAP staff workload. We are looking at developing regional training modules and webinars as a means to address rapid turnover.



FOOD SAFETY & CONSUMER SERVICES

Food Assistance Program

Kim Eads, Program Manager

Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

- In addition to our contractors which are made up of food banks, food pantries, community action programs, and tribes, we actively partner with the Washington Food Coalition which supports much of the work we do.
- We also collaborate with the Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition, Rotary First Harvest, Northwest Harvest and several other coalitions. At the state level, we serve on the Governor's Advisory Committee on Homelessness, the Governor's Inter-Agency Council on Health Disparities, and the Food System Roundtable which is made up of state agencies, advocacy coalitions and food sector partners. At the federal level we are members of the American Commodity Distribution Association which brings together state agencies, industry, contractors and partners involved in USDA food programs. Over the last few years, there has been a concerted effort to coordinate and partner strategically at local, state and federal levels.

LEAN Update

- With the implementation of the regional model at the start of this biennium, we continued cross training our staff throughout 2014 with a focus on one point of contact for each contractor. This approach has improved our quality of service and strengthened our relationships with the people we serve.
- We continued work on the contractor payment tracking system for FY15. All program payments are tracked by contractor, program(s) administered, and by fiscal year for the biennium. This all inclusive system corresponds with the data entered into ECMS as well as individual internal program financial spreadsheets, and uses visual management to go along with our combined contract model.
- Using lean principals, we created a 4 year combined review schedule for our contractors to ensure we were compliant with state and federal regulations while giving us the ability to address all program needs with one visit. This promoted customer and staff satisfaction while reducing time and expenses for both our program and our contractors.
- Value stream mapping was established for our Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), as well as the Governor's Goal 4 - Healthier Food Options Reporting. We continue to review our current state to make sure our future state is in line with our program goals.

Coming in 2015

- We will continue to identify new ways to improve the quality of our services and pilot projects. We will focus on improving our contractor procedures manuals, internal processes, and move to a more paperless system using lean tools.



Core Functions and Services

- The Food Safety Program protects and reduces the risk to public health by assuring the safety of the state's food and feed supplies and facilitating the movement of Washington agricultural products in domestic and international markets. While conducting detailed inspections and investigations for compliance, the Food Safety Program also provides education, training and outreach as a way to reach compliance first. We are convinced that the most effective manner to facilitate compliant and viable businesses is to provide education before regulation. This starts with the first idea that a firm wants to become a processor to ongoing education and technical assistance as a firm grows. The Managers in the program give many training classes and stakeholder outreach meetings in all of our Program areas.
- The Food Safety Program is responsible for the licensing, inspection and compliance of food processing facilities, dairy plant and farm operations, food storage warehouses and feed manufacturing facilities. The program maintains the Interstate Milk Shipper's Program which allows for the ability of the dairy industry to ship milk and milk products out of state without interruption.



Core Functions and Services

- In the event of a food emergency response, Food Safety program staff work closely with other Division Programs, FDA and the Washington State Department of Health in conducting investigations of facilities and collecting samples for testing. All of the Food Safety Managers and many of the field staff who serve as “boots on the ground” have been trained in the Incident Command Structure (ICS) protocols. ICS is employed during all emergency responses with most of the Command and General Staff positions filled by Food Safety Program staff.

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Increased the compliance rate from 90% to 94% for food processing firms through more technical assistance and improved compliance procedures resulting in a safer food supply and greater public health protection.
- All Program staff evaluations and expectations were completed on time.
- Program Management conducted a Program Meeting in Spokane, WA on October 6-9 2014.
- 19.5 MFRPS Continuing Education credits were assigned to staff as a result of the training nature of the meeting and 36 continuing education credits are required every three years.
- The Program Manager and Assistant Program Manager have finished work that has resulted in conformance with Standards 2 & 3 of the Manufactured Regulatory Program Standards.
- Successful completion of the following 2013-2014 contracts/grants/cooperative agreements: FDA Food Inspections, FDA Feed Inspections, FDA Feed Safety and BSE/Ruminant feed Ban Grant, FDA Building Inspection Capacity Grant (second year).
- The Food Safety Program Manager was re-elected for a seventh term as the National Egg Regulatory Officials Treasurer, serving as the regulatory voting representative to the National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers and serves as the Program representative to the National Association of Dairy Regulatory Officials.
- Food Safety Program staff developed the inspection forms and technical assistance guides in response to the passing of the Marijuana Infused Edible (MIE) law. The WSDA Food Safety Program is contracted by the Liquor Control Board to perform sanitary inspections for the applicants who are producing Marijuana Infused Edible (MIE) products. The Food Safety Program has conducted 27 of these inspections this year.
- The Program Manager, Assistant Program Manager and Region Managers conducted educational outreach classes, seminars and professional conference presentations which provided technical and public health training to other regulatory communities, stakeholders and the agricultural/food processing community. These included presentations to the National Association of Dairy Officials, National Egg Regulatory Officials, Washington Association for Food Protection, Mother Earth News Fair, WSU Extension Classes, community educational events and WSU Cheese Making Classes.



FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

Lucy Severs, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- A new Food licensing and inspection database system (FRED) was deployed. Work continues in collaboration with the Division Business Analyst and the WSDA IT department to build in add-ons and create work queries.
- Program staff attended ICS Operations Chief School so as develop more expertise for coverage during our Incident Command Structure (ICS) management system run food emergency events.
- The Food Safety Program Manager/ Assistant Program Manager served as the ICS Incident Commander and program staff filled most of the ICS Command Staff and General Staff ICS positions for the following recalled food events:
 - ✓ E. Coli 0157:H7 bacteria in two raw retail milk firms
 - ✓ Antibiotic residue in two raw retail milk firms
 - ✓ Sub-legal pasteurizer temperatures in milk at two Dairy Processing firms
 - ✓ Listeria monocytogenes in ice cream
 - ✓ Listeria monocytogenes in pasta salad
 - ✓ Allergen recalls involving five food firms
 - ✓ Incorrect PH in acidified foods in two food firms
 - ✓ Investigations at two firms involving Salmonella illnesses
- A new set of rules for Direct Seller's was enacted with Food Safety Program staff taking the lead on creating inspection criteria and training material. The first applicant has been licensed successfully.
- Food Safety Program staff attended the Western Association of Food and Drug Officials Annual Education Conference, the Northwest Food Processor's Expo, The Washington Association for Food Protection, The Northwest Food Safety and Sanitation Conference, the National Egg Regulatory Officials Annual Educational Conference, the quarterly Washington Food Protection Task Force Meetings, the Regional Conference for Interstate Milk Shippers, the National Association of Dairy Regulator, the National Egg Quality School and the AAFCO regional and national seminars.

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- With the passage of The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) the WSDA Food Safety Program must continue the work to meet the Manufactured Food Regulatory Standards. FSMA will continue to be implemented by FDA in the food and feed areas and this will impact the Food Safety program and the stakeholders we regulate as new rules are released. How the Food Safety Program will be fully impacted is dependent on the final rule language and the timeframe in which FDA enforces any new rule. The program will continue to look for opportunities to be involved in educational outreach to stakeholder groups and will be looking for opportunities to partner with FDA, state, local, extension and industry groups to help provide training where possible.



Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

- Over the last few years, we have seen that due to the public's increased expectation of a safe food supply and businesses being forced to become more efficient to survive, this has resulted in the program strengthening our partnerships with other regulatory entities and the businesses that we regulate. FDA has increased the amount of funds available to state programs to build infrastructure, conduct inspections, increase training and respond to food born events. Our program is the recipient of many of these funds. We have naturally become even stronger partners due to this. We hold joint training events, conduct monthly compliance calls and team up for food born events.
- We have strong partnerships with the State Department of Health (DOH) and the local health jurisdictions (LHJ). We depend on the DOH labs to conduct the genetic testing on pathogens so we can definitively find the cause of a food born event. Our field staff works closely with the LHJ on many product related concerns. We coordinate and consult with USDA on meat and egg issues and receive illness cluster information leads to assist in food safety investigations.
- The Food Safety Program is linked to many of the Programs in our Division. The Food Safety Program has cross-walked with the Food Assistance Program on warehouse licensing, the Organic Program on mutual compliance concerns, the Microbiology Laboratory on routine and food event sampling and the Livestock Nutrient program concerning inspector safety issues. We continue to work with Liquor Control Board on conducting Food Safety Inspections at the firms that infuse marijuana into food products. The Program works closely with the Division Business Analyst on budget, database development, timekeeping and Washington GOV Stat processes.
- The program maintains strong stakeholder relationships with the many industries we inspect. There are many advisory groups maintained that assist us during rule making and they offer guidance and thoughts on our processes. A close working relationship is required with the dairy industry. The dairy industry must comply with the Interstate Shipper's Program requirements to be able to export Grade A products out of state. Both parties need to do their parts so as to avoid a break in that business flow. The program issues Export Sanitary certificates based on our inspection work which assists industry in exporting to foreign nations.

LEAN Update

- Over the past year the Program has continued to embrace the LEAN concept. Several LEAN events have been conducted. From these LEAN events staff began implementing new procedures to eliminate waste and better serve our stakeholders and customers.
- Dairy Technician Renewal Process –The program finished a LEAN event concerning the renewal of Dairy Technician licenses. The final calculations revealed a savings of 205.5 man hours and \$4,496.40. This template will be used to LEAN the warehouse and food processing renewals.
- FDA Contract Inspections – A LEAN study was conducted to make the billing of the FDA contract more efficient. Division and program staff were involved in the process to make the system more efficient from beginning to end.
- XLIMS Database Utilization – Training and access to the XLIMS system was provided to the Food Safety Program staff which allowed the stopping of double entry of sample collection data.



Core Functions and Services

- The WSDA Food Safety & Dairy (Microbiology) Laboratory Program is the Central Food Safety laboratory for the State of Washington and also the State Central Milk Regulatory Laboratory certified by U.S.-FDA for dairy testing. The laboratory conducts surveillance testing of food & dairy products and animal feed samples for the regulatory purpose. In addition to surveillance testing, the laboratory plays a crucial role in outbreak situations, recalls and follow-up testing. We are the only state regulatory laboratory with the capability and certifications to regularly test food and dairy products. The Laboratory's customers are the WSDA Food Safety Program and U.S.-FDA /Food Emergency Response Network (FERN).
- Our laboratory provides state-of-art scientific lab testing to support the WSDA Food Safety Program in accordance with the agency's mission to protect public health. The Laboratory provides testing and data on food borne pathogens (*E.coli* O157, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli*, and *Staphylococcus* enterotoxin) to regulatory agencies, our federal partners, and the agricultural community. Each year approximately 2,100 human food and animal feed samples are tested (about 7,000 total tests) in the Food Microbiology section. This testing provides information for food borne pathogen surveillance and recall activities, and is proactive in nature helping to prevent outbreaks of disease for consumers in Washington State. It should be noted that we were the sentinel state laboratory that picked up *Salmonella* in peanut butter during the national recall of Trader Joe peanut butter in 2012.
- In addition to food and feed testing, the WSDA Food Safety & Dairy (Microbiology) Laboratory also tests 3,500-4,000 dairy-related products (about 10,000 total tests). All our laboratory microbiologists must be certified by U.S.-FDA to perform this testing. This testing allows the interstate shipment of dairy products and is required by the FDA. As the state's Central Milk Regulatory Laboratory certified by U.S.-FDA, our laboratory conducts an annual on-site evaluation of all dairy industry Appendix N Laboratories in WA State. These industry laboratories conduct antibiotic testing of their milk and they are evaluated and trained by us to adhere to federal and state regulations. In addition, we evaluate more than 200 dairy industry analysts within the state of Washington for Appendix N proficiency testing.



Core Functions and Services

- Without our approval/evaluation, these dairies would be unable to sell dairy products outside of Washington State. The laboratory conducts special microbiological projects that aid the Food Safety branch during food safety events. One such project in the past year involved an in-depth survey and testing to aid a Washington dairy farm with a continuing food safety issue in its dairy products.
- To recognize our achievement, we have been selected to be awarded U.S. FDA Food Emergency Response Network Cooperative Agreement since 2009. Under this cooperative agreement, our laboratory; 1) conducts food borne pathogen testing for special Political Assignments during major political events (Republican / Democratic National Convention; presidential Inauguration etc.); 2) acts as a satellite mini FDA-like Microbiology lab during food borne pathogen outbreak and/or emergency; and 3) participates in FDA's research and development projects.

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Our Laboratory passed the FDA Triennial Dairy National Milk Laboratory Evaluation and Certification in 2014, and is fully accredited as the Central State Milk Laboratory. All our microbiologists passed the 2014 proficiency test for FDA-LPET/NCIMS Dairy testing. One of our Microbiologists was granted certification as a new State Laboratory Evaluation Officer (LEO), increasing the number of LEO's in our program to two. Two LEOs in our lab conducted biennial evaluations of 11 Appendix N laboratories for adherence to FDA Milk requirements for antibiotic testing, and also evaluated more than 200 dairy analysts in the Washington State dairy industry.
- The laboratory earned re-accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 in January, 2014 and added two new analytical methods to its ISO scope. We passed all food pathogen proficiency testing with 100% accuracy, and successfully uploaded all testing data to FDA's eLEXNET database throughout the year.
- Our laboratory was asked to perform emergency testing for *Salmonella* implicated in an outbreak from a custom slaughter house. Our test results detected *Salmonella* in the meat samples. Our test results also supported the WSDA's regulatory action to revoke the license of custom slaughter house Vilog, LLC for a general failure to protect food products from contamination.
- Our laboratory detected antibiotic residue in retail raw milk from Laughing Goat Farm. We assisted the farm owners with their subsequent recall process.
- Two *Listeria monocytogenes* illnesses were epidemiologically associated with a high protein shake mix processed by Snoqualmie Gourmet Ice Cream in Snohomish, WA. Investigatory samples were taken from the firm and then analyzed by our laboratory. Our laboratory confirmed the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes* both in finished product and the processing environment. Subsequent PFGE analysis conducted on the clinical patient isolates and the isolates our laboratory submitted resulted in matching patterns with both clinical cases. Our program was operating under a scheduled food safety sample reduction week to coincide with the holiday; however, the emergency required testing all through the holiday week including Christmas day. We managed to meet the unusually high demand and successfully completed confirmation and isolation of *Listeria monocytogenes* in 40 ice cream and environmental samples in a short time frame. The data produced by the WSDA Microbiology Laboratory provided concrete evidence that the illnesses were linked to Snoqualmie Gourmet Ice Cream and provided a solid foundation for our agency and FDA to initiate a product recall.



Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Our laboratory discovered *Listeria monocytogenes* in Basil Pesto Salad from a Kirkland WA firm and assisted with the product recall.
- We discovered STEC pathogenic *E.coli* in a retail raw dairy sample (Blackjack Farms), which also led to a recall.
- Our FERN section has participated in a new FDA assignment of avocado testing for *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* since last May. Our data, along with other FERN labs' data, has made tremendous contribution to a new finding: avocado can be a potentially high risk product for *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination. Our laboratory assisted FDA to re-visit and optimize the current testing method.

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- Retirement of a long-term permanent employee, and the extended absence of another long-term employee, will result in the need to hire additional Microbiologists and spend time training them to meet our laboratory's standards.
- Due to the sunset/cutback of a few federal grants (MDP and RRT), our program has been experiencing financial strain from late 2013.
- Technology is moving to WGS from PFGE, and it would be a huge benefit to our laboratory to obtain WGS capability in order to supply more complete information to the Food Safety Program.

LEAN Update

- Quality System documents are transitioning to the shared drive for our lab so that paper can be eliminated and everyone can see quality documents that could come under examination during an internal or external audit without asking for the documents from the QAO. These documents can be viewed, but not modified.
- Our office identified out of date forms that can be removed from our forms list that no longer need to be updated.
- We established a new LAB Sample email address for consolidated Food & Dairy sections that will arrive to special folders in the respective mail boxes as a more efficient way for the office staff to communicate with the field FSOs.
- Safety Data Sheet (SDS, formerly MSDS) forms were updated. We need to extract them from the website and save them to our shared drive so we have instant access to them. In the future, SDS data will be available electronically.
- We would love to have our LIMS Program updated to make it more user-friendly and more efficient so it doesn't take us so long to go through our records and extract data.



Core Functions and Services

- The Washington State Department of Agriculture Organic Food Program protects consumers and supports the organic food industry by ensuring the integrity of organic food products. The program certifies organic producers and handlers in Washington State in accordance with US National Organic Standards and international market requirements. In addition to organic certification, the Organic Food Program reviews and registers input materials for use in organic production. The WSDA program remains the largest state run organic certification agency in the country in terms of customer and acreage numbers. The Organic Program is accredited by USDA National Organic Program (NOP) to perform certification in accordance with 7CFR Part 205. No general funds are received to operate the program.



ORGANIC PROGRAM

Brenda Book, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Organic certification gives access to the organic label and market. Certification is provided through professional evaluations of applications, rigorous onsite inspections, and objective reviews. Key accomplishments in 2014 include:
 - In 2014 the Organic Program certified 1,090 organic operations in accordance with USDA National Organic Regulations.
 - ✓ 717 - Producers (crop and livestock farms)
 - ✓ 210 - Processors (manufacturers organic products)
 - ✓ 149 - Handlers (packers, warehouses, distributors, brokers)
 - ✓ 14 – Retailers (grocery stores, restaurants)
 - Over 90% of the organic businesses in Washington State are certified by WSDA Organic Program. Less than 5% of WSDA’s clients reside outside of the state where services are provided to ancillary facilities and under cooperative agreements with other state department partners.
 - The Organic Program reviewed and registered 795 organic compliant input materials. The online published list of materials is referenced by organic farms and agriculture professionals nationally and continues to be the most accessed webpage with the Food Safety and Consumer Services Division.
 - Technical specialists evaluated 1,092 initial and renewal organic certification applications and 1,166 inspection reports for organic compliance in 2014.
 - Field inspectors conducted 1,086 annual organic inspections and 89 additional inspections in order to ensure organic integrity.
 - The program developed personal service contracts with three qualified independent organic inspectors, who conducted over 90 annual inspections in outlying areas that are not readily accessible to in-house inspectors.
 - Staff worked quickly to respond to complaints about mislabeling organic products. 19 out of the 20 complaints received in 2014 have been closed. The program worked in partnership with agency colleagues to provide technical assistance and bring the companies into compliance.
 - Organic Program staff collected samples from 62 certified operations of 19 different crops. These samples were sent to accredited labs to be tested for prohibited pesticide residues in order to ensure organic integrity and to evaluate organic compliance.
 - The quality of the program’s certification services was highlighted after the mid-term accreditation audit by USDA National Organic Program resulted in zero non-compliance.



ORGANIC PROGRAM

Brenda Book, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Funded through the farm bill, the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program helps farmers, handlers and processors afford the expense of organic certification by reimbursing them for up to 75% of their certification costs, with a maximum of \$750 per scope of operation. As a participating agency in this federal program, WSDA Organic Program issued \$466,461.92 in reimbursements to 789 organic operations.
- The program supports the development of organic agriculture through education, outreach and technical assistance. The program strives to communicate effectively and ensure organic requirements are easily understood. Key accomplishments in 2014 include:
 - The Organic Program received a contract from USDA to provide outreach and education to small diversified organic farmers about the organic certification process. The four areas of the project, to be completed in 2015, include – videos, web applications, classroom curriculum, and peer to peer farm walk education programs.
 - An Outreach and Education Specialist position was created and successfully filled. The new position coordinates the education needs of organic stakeholders so that technical assistance needs are effectively addressed.
 - In partnership with Tilth Producers of Washington, the WSDA Organic Program co-hosted and sponsored a first-of-its-kind Technical Assistance Fair at the Tilth annual conference in Vancouver, WA. The Organic Program recruited multiple WSDA programs, partner agencies and non-profit organizations for one-on-one conversations with farmers about available resources and regulatory requirements.
 - New organic certification fact sheets were published in 2014 to increase public awareness of organic standards and provide assistance with navigating the organic certification process. *Selling Organic Slaughter Stock* provides assistance to livestock operations. The *Organic and Good Agriculture Practices* factsheet explains the differences in the two standards as it compares organic and GAP requirements.
 - An Organic System Plan is required of each certified client. 2014 marked the completion of a three year project to update all Organic System Plans to a more dynamic system. The “Living Organic System Plan” reduces the demand on the certified operation, allows clients to easily communicate changes and improves the accuracy of the agreed plan.
 - Spanish speaking specialists were available to provide technical assistance for callers and during annual inspections as part of a new service to clients.
 - Technical specialists returned as speakers for numerous Washington State Cultivating Success courses across the state, providing valuable information to potential new organic farmers and businesses.



ORGANIC PROGRAM

Brenda Book, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Technical specialists attended and provided outreach and education about organic certification at numerous industry events in 2014, including, but not limited to:
 - ✓ WSU-Tilth Producer Farm Walks
 - ✓ Young Farmers Coalition Meeting
 - ✓ Washington Organic Dairy Producers Association
 - ✓ Tilth Producers of Washington Annual Conference
 - ✓ Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Conference
 - ✓ Washington Organic Recycling Council Meeting
 - ✓ Focus on Farming
 - ✓ Washington Small Fruit Conference
 - ✓ Cascadia Grain Conference
 - ✓ Washington State Farmers Market Association Meeting
 - ✓ Organicology

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- The program is dependent on an Access database system developed in 1998 that is largely unsupported by the agency's Information Technology Program. This outdated system for tracking clients and certification work is not automated and requires accurate manual data entry for consistent tracking and reporting. Client forms, agency communication and inspection reports cannot be linked to the database system and requires maintenance of a hard copy file for all certified clients and material registrants. In 2015, Organic Program staff will be working to implement a new data system specifically created for third party organic certification agencies.
- The assessment of certification fees based on the gross annual income of product, rather than the amount of work involved in providing the service, creates challenges in adequately funding program work. The program aims to work with stakeholders and to submit a proposal in 2015 to restructure and/or increase the current fee schedule in order to provide adequate funding to support certification and material review services.

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- Internally, adequate staff to complete annual certification is an ongoing concern. In 2015, the filling of vacant staff positions and contractors will be critical to the program's ability to provide program services. Training of new staff will also continue to be a major priority over the next year, and a major demand on senior staff resources.



ORGANIC PROGRAM

Brenda Book, Program Manager

Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

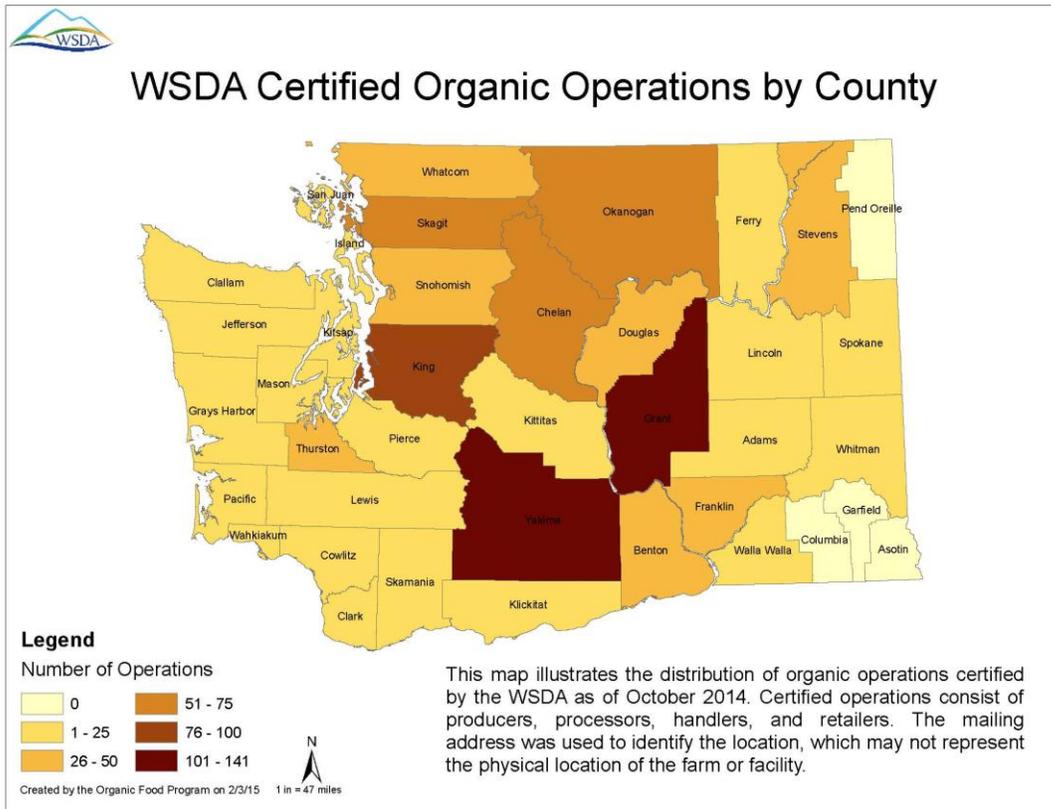
- In addition to working closely with the state's Organic Advisory Board (a representation of organic customers across Washington), the program engages the industry and participates as an active member through several organizations and boards, including: Washington Organic Recycling Council, WSU Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources and Tilth Producers of Washington.
- The WSDA Organic Program works closely with USDA National Organic Program and all other USDA accredited certifiers, both private and government agencies. We operate in a spirit of cooperation which allows us to share resources and focus on the shared mission of organic integrity.
- The Organic Program has a long history of forging partnerships and links within the organic industry. As we look to the future, program staffs are eager to advance services to shared customers and coordinate efforts in licensing through improved internal partnerships.

LEAN Update

- The program continues to embrace a culture built on visual management, focuses on value added work, and eliminates waste in the form of hidden workloads and delayed customer response. In 2015, client surveys will be conducted to help analyze the program's success on improving customer service and the efficiency of our processes.



Certified Organic Operations by County





RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM

Randy Treadwell, Program Manager

2014 Rapid Response Team

2014 Washington RRT Annual Exercise: A Multi-Jurisdictional Collaboration

Randy Treadwell¹ and Alicia Weitzel²



Introduction

About the Washington RRT:
The Washington RRT is one of the original nine response teams established in 2009. Team development and maintenance is primarily a joint effort between the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the Seattle District Office of the FDA (FDA SEA-DO).

The Washington RRT has been structured to incorporate multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary participation during emergency responses. The Washington RRT builds its capacity as an all-hazards, multi-jurisdictional response team through use of joint field teams, increased interagency communication, and the Incident Command System (ICS).

About Washington RRT's Annual Training/Exercise:
In order to continually improve the team's capacity to mount an integrated response to a food/feed emergency, this year's exercise built on the previous year's exercise scenario to include joint sampling assignments using both established WSDA and FDA sampling procedures. Responders from both agencies practiced each other's sampling techniques in a mock sampling environment.



Participating Agencies/Programs

The following agencies/programs actively participated in this year's training and/or functional exercise:

Federal:

- FDA Seattle District Office
- FDA Pacific Region
- USDA FSIS
- USDA APHIS (ESF 11)

State:

- WSDA Rapid Response Program
- WSDA Food Safety Program
- WSDA Office of Compliance and Outreach
- WSDA Risk Management Program
- WSDA Office of Communications
- Washington State Dept. of Health (WA DOH) Communicable Disease Epidemiology
- WA DOH Division of Environmental Public Health, Food Safety Program
- Oregon Dept. of Agriculture



2014 Training/Exercise Overview

The annual training was divided into two components: classroom and functional exercise. Both components emphasized the sharing of agency knowledge and procedures with partner agencies. Classroom components were based in part from feedback obtained from the previous year's After Action Review and the functional exercise built on the previous year's exercise objectives.

Classroom Component:
A large proportion of the classroom component was dedicated to increasing team awareness around the response capabilities of our food safety partners. FDA, USDA FSIS, and WA DOH Communicable Disease Epi were invited to present how their agency responds internally to food/feed related emergencies. In addition to increasing awareness of each agency's response capabilities, the following topics were addressed:

- Information sharing/FDA commissioning
- Washington State Public Disclosure Act
- Media relations/inter-agency information coordination during emergencies

Functional Exercise Component:
Specific exercise-related items from the 2013 annual exercise after-action review/report were directly used in the creation of this year's exercise in order to address areas of improvement and build team capability in a progressive manner. The functional exercise was comprised of two sections:

- Creation of an Incident Command Post and Incident Action Plan in a *reduced timeframe* from previous exercises
- Aseptically sampling whole raw cabbage product and irrigation water using multi-agency sampling teams

Progressive Exercise Objectives

2013 Functional Exercise:

- Increase familiarity with the WA RRT activation procedures
- Practice the implementation of ICS to manage a multi-agency incident response
- Utilize the principles of ICS to develop an Incident Action Plan and Situation Report

2014 Functional Exercise:

- Practice establishment of an Incident Command Post (ICP) operated under Unified Command
- Increase team efficiency in creating an Incident Action Plan (IAP) with field group notification and deployment components
- Cross-train WSDA and FDA responders on each agency's respective aseptic sampling procedures

Available Exercise Tools/Resources

The following resources are available on FoodSHIELD or upon request:

- Functional Exercise Participant Manuals (2013 and 2014)
- Functional Exercise Controller Manuals (2013 and 2014)
- Joint Sampling Exercise Facilitator Manual (2014)
- Functional Exercise Initial Incident Briefing Presentation (2014)
- 2013 Training Agenda
- 2014 Training Agenda

Contact Information

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Core Functions and Services

- The Rapid Response Program develops and manages the Washington Rapid Response Team (RRT). The RRT is an "all hazards" response team consisting of food/feed safety and public health partners within Washington State. The team's primary response partners are WSDA and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Seattle District Office (SEA-DO). These two agencies, in conjunction with additional public health partners such as Washington State Department of Health, collaborate to improve the efficiency of food/feed-related emergency response and reduce the time to a meaningful public health intervention. During a response, WSDA and FDA SEA-DO commonly staff joint-agency field teams and manage activities through the use of the Incident Command System (ICS). The term "food emergency" can include incidents related to human and animal food contamination (unintentional and intentional), food-borne illness outbreaks, product recalls, natural disasters, and other incidents that may impact the safety of Washington State's food supply.



RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM

Randy Treadwell, Program Manager

Core Functions and Services

- The Rapid Response Program also houses the division's Recall Coordinator, who assists both the programs within the division and FDA SEA-DO in a wide array of recall activities related to food and feed. The Recall Coordinator also coordinates and delivers several outreach opportunities for regulators and industry throughout the year. The Rapid Response Program also houses the division's Recall Coordinator, who assists both the programs within the division and FDA SEA-DO in a wide array of recall activities related to food and feed. The Recall Coordinator also creates and delivers several outreach opportunities for regulators and industry throughout the year. Outreach topics include recall processes, proactive recall planning, microbiology, animal health, allergen control, and food labeling.
- The Rapid Response Program Manager currently chairs the Washington State Food Protection Task Force (FPTF). The FPTF is a cooperative association of food and feed regulatory entities in Washington State that includes stakeholders from the local, state, and federal level. The FPTF exists to identify and address human and animal food safety issues within Washington State, provide an interactive forum to enhance communication and partnerships amongst its participants, and increase awareness of food safety and defense educational opportunities to all stakeholders.
- The Rapid Response Program also assists the WSDA Food Safety and Consumer Services Division in its continual improvement efforts. This is accomplished through the implementation of the FDA's Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS), a set of ten national standards that address all major operations in a food regulatory program. The Rapid Response Program has taken lead on several of the deliverables related to Standard 5 that addresses program elements related to foodborne illness and outbreaks.

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- The RRT participated in response activities related to the following incidents:
 - E. coli STEC in retail raw milk
 - Listeria monocytogenes in pasta salad
 - Norovirus illnesses associated with breaded oysters
 - Patulin exceeding 50 ppm in apple cider
 - Possible Clostridium botulinum in BBQ sauce
 - Listeria monocytogenes in ice cream and ice cream mix
 - Listeria monocytogenes in pasteurized cheese
- The WSDA Recall Coordinator participated in recall activities associated with the following incidents:
 - Possible Clostridium botulinum in BBQ Sauce
 - Two events related to E. coli STEC in retail raw milk
 - Listeria monocytogenes in pasta salad
 - Listeria monocytogenes in ice cream and ice cream mix
 - Potential C. Botulism in improperly processed pasta sauce
 - Antibiotic residue in retail raw milk
 - Patulin exceeding 50 ppm in apple cider
 - Improperly pasteurized milk in yogurt



RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM

Randy Treadwell, Program Manager

Key Accomplishments for 2014

- Obtained joint WSDA and FDA SEA-DO endorsement of the Rapid Response Team Operations Manual.
- Finalized the Rapid Response Program Sustainability Plan.
- Coordinated with WSDA Food Safety and WA DOH to chair the Washington Food Protection Task Force.
- Continue to work with partner programs within the division to further develop infrastructure related to the Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS).
- Maintained RRT response capacity by conducting a multi-day training and functional exercise that invited representatives from the following entities:
 - ✓ WSDA Food Safety and Consumer Services Division (FSCS) Food Safety Program
 - ✓ WSDA FSCS Office of Compliance and Outreach
 - ✓ WSDA Risk Management Program
 - ✓ WSDA Office of Communications
 - ✓ Washington State Department of Health Communicable Disease Epidemiology
 - ✓ Washington State Department of Health Food Safety program
 - ✓ Oregon Department of Agriculture
 - ✓ FDA SEA-DO
 - ✓ FDA Pacific Region Emergency Response
 - ✓ USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
 - ✓ USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Emergency Support Function (ESF-11)
- Maintained communication with FDA SEA-DO response partners by facilitating monthly situational awareness conference calls.
- Increased accessibility of response tools and documents for RRT members by creating a secure, internet-based sharing portal.
- Provided best-practice guidance to mentor RRT housed in the Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals.
- Hosted a four-day ICS Planning Section Chief training attended by four RRT states and two FDA districts.
- Provided funding for three RRT Core Members to attend ICS Operations Section Chief/Incident Commander training.
- Participated in national state/federal workgroups including updating the national RRT Best Practices Manual ICS and Working with Other Agencies chapters.
- Shared development documents with RRTs located in other states including:
 - Excerpts from the current RRT SOP manual with RRT partners in Minnesota, Michigan, Texas, and Georgia.
 - Exercise materials that were jointly created by WSDA and FDA SEA-DO with Massachusetts RRT.



RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM

Randy Treadwell, Program Manager

Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- Despite considerable investment from the division and agency, there continues to be uncertainty surrounding future funding for the RRT project at the federal level. In response, the Rapid Response Program Sustainability Plan was created in order to prioritize RRT-specific capacities that should be maintained with decreased funding. The plan will be updated on an annual basis to reflect changes in the state and federal funding environments.
- When considering its portfolio of possible development projects, the Rapid Response Program will continue to emphasize the importance of projects that would continue to develop RRT response capacity, despite the possible absence of federal support. Continued and consistent funding support for the RRT is integral to the continued development of an integrated food safety network both within Washington State and nationally.

Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

- Over the past year, the Rapid Response Program has prioritized building relationships between food/feed safety partners in order to increase response efficiency and effectiveness. Within the agency, the RRT closely interacts with many other programs including Food Safety, Office of Compliance and Outreach, and the Communications Office. The RRT has also worked this year to increase communication with the Risk Management Program and the Animal Services Division, both of which commonly participate in emergency response activities and would serve as valuable resources during agency-wide all-hazards responses.
- Outside the agency, the RRT routinely partners with FDA, USDA, Washington State Department of Health, and local health jurisdictions on workgroups and/or coordinating committees such as the Food Protection Task Force. The RRT continues to collaborate with its partners at the Oregon Department of Agriculture to share lessons-learned guidance on food/feed emergency response.
- The RRT contributes to ongoing national efforts to create models for RRT development and share best practices for success.
- Members of the RRT are active in various associations and institutes, including the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), American Public Health Association (APHA), Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), and the International Food Protection Training Institute (IFPTI).

LEAN Update

- Opportunities for LEAN optimization in the Rapid Response Program include:
 - Creating an electronic inventory control process for RRT response equipment and consumable supplies.
 - Streamlining recall document archiving and record retention procedures.



RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM

Randy Treadwell, Program Manager

Coming in 2015

- The RRT Program will be working to address the following during the next year:
 - Continued refinement of the Washington Rapid Response Team Operations Manual.
 - Update the Rapid Response Program Sustainability Plan.
 - Host training opportunities and exercises for RRT Core Members and food/feed safety partners including courses in epidemiology and ICS for agency executives.
 - Assist in augmenting WSDA laboratory capacity related to RRT responses.
 - Increase participation in mentor RRT development work/exercises.
 - Continue to identify and procure equipment and supplies that will increase RRT response capacity and encourage communication among food/feed response partners.
 - Work on increasing communication among food safety partners in Washington State by continued participation in the Washington Food Protection Task Force.
 - Continue to build depth into the RRT through training and other staff development opportunities.
 - Continue to collaborate with partner programs within the division on MFRPS development.
 - Continue to work on a national level to emphasize RRT capabilities as an important component to an integrated food safety system.



Core Functions and Services

- The Office of Compliance and Outreach (OCO) provides education, outreach and fair compliance response to support production of quality agricultural products and to maximize the safety and security of Washington's food system. To facilitate productive and efficient interactions between WSDA and the agriculture industry, OCO works collaboratively within the Food Safety & Consumer Services Division and across WSDA to promote and enhance the cohesive operations of the Agency and improve service delivery. The Office of Compliance and Outreach believes that the most effective way to facilitate good business practices is to provide education before regulation. We prioritize partnership with stakeholders and across agencies to cultivate and communicate best practices for safe food production and marketplace success.
- The Office of Compliance and Outreach (OCO) unit provides many services within the Food Safety & Consumers Services Division. The core functions of the unit are: auditing and quality management; budgetary and regulatory review; commercial feed licensing and pet food product registration; cottage food reviews; country of origin labeling reviews; compliance actions, education and outreach activities; including farm to school, farm to institutions, direct marketing, good agricultural practices (GAPs) regarding food and feed safety regulatory and business requirements.

Key Accomplishments the last 12 months

- The OCO Administrator worked closely with the FS&CS Divisional Coordinator, Assistant Director's Special Assistant, and the FS&CS Program Managers along with WSDA fiscal staff on reviewing all budgets and funding sources within the division.
- The OCO Administrator participated on the Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance (FSPCA) developing training related to the new FDA Preventive Controls rule for small and medium food processors. She is also a member of the National Partnership for Food Protection (PNP) Governance Council helping to streamline and integrate our federal, state and local food safety systems. A PNP 50 state meeting was held August 2014.
- The OCO Administrator participated on the WSDA working group, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Technical Working Group and the NCIMS Liaison Committee reviewing the revised FDA draft rules on Produce Safety, Prevention and Controls, Animal Feed and Foreign Supplier Verification during the second public comment period.
- The FDA Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS) cooperative agreement work is cross divisional work by staff from OCO, the Food Safety Program, the Rapid Response Team and the Microbiology Laboratory. FDA conducted a 36 month performance audit of the MFRPS work in January. WSDA staff attended the March MFRPS Alliance meeting and participation in regional and national standards revision work is on-going. The FDA MFRPS standards staff visited with WSDA in August to review our work followed by monthly phone updates. Work on the Standard 4 Auditing was completed by our 2 quality performance auditors during this period.
- Our new compliance officer (CO) attended WSDA and FDA training on food safety and regulatory compliance processes. She participated in visits with Oregon Department of Agriculture and FDA to learn about their enforcement processes and she met with WSDA's assigned Assistant Attorney General (AAG) and the WSDA Administrative Regulations office to review the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), laws and regulations. The CO participated in field inspections and held a focus group on compliance case follow up work. She took lessons learned and applied them to our enforcement strategies revising a number of enforcement actions streamlining and developing standardized protocols. Training courses on share point and Visio tools helped to map out and document these protocols.



Key Accomplishments the last 12 months

- Compliance actions issued in 2014 include: 523 Notice of Correction letters including our first Cottage Food Operation warning letter; 4 Dairy Farm NOI's; 4 Food Plant NOI's; and 2 Custom Meat NOI actions. Final actions on firms vary depending on the compliance case but include one or more of the following: license suspension; degrade; civil penalty; or compliance agreement settlements whereby the firm demonstrated correction and verified by WSDA. The two custom meat firms which had licenses revoked for on-going failures to meet state requirements and settlements were reached with eight operations who demonstrated on-going correction.
- There are 662 Commercial Feed Licenses, 476 Pet Food Product Registrants with approximately 10,000 pet food products approved or pending in the state. There are 4835 approved and 5165 pending products under review or waiting for corrections by applicants. During this period, approximately 2,321,556.01 tons of feed products were reported to WSDA. A pet food registration specialist and an administrative assistant position were filled. A review of WSDA policies and procedures related to commercial feed and pet food continues. Additionally, a review of the feed laws and rules have identified the need to conduct rulemaking to adopt the most current FDA rules and the Model AAFCO documents. The OCO Senior Animal Feed Coordinator is a member of the AAFCO Pet Food Committee, the Feed Labeling Committee and updated the AAFCO Pet Food Website during this period.
- In April, 2014, the Office of Compliance and Outreach conducted a feed tour to help educate WSDA employees of the commercial feed industry. Participants included 5 OCO staff as well as the OCO administrator, 2 Food Safety Officers (who helped coordinate site visits) and the WSDA Communications Director. The tour consisted of a tour at a dairy in Pasco, a grain elevator in Kennewick, a feedlot in Eltopia (one of the largest in the state), and a canola crushing facility in Warden. We also visited the WSU facility that produces feed for WSU animals as well as local farmers.
- OCO worked with WSDA IT staff, the WSDA Contract Manager and a FSCS Project Manager to develop a Request For Proposals (RFP) for contracting with an IT development company to overhaul our feed database systems used to license and register Commercial feed companies.
- Thirty FDA Contract audits were completed by our two FDA State Auditors during the FDA State contract period. They also participated in three FDA Environmental Sampling events with Food Safety, Rapid Response Team and Microbiology program members.
- There were 88 cottage food operations with 4285 public health recipe and label reviews performed. OCO initiated the use of Qiqqa, a software application tool that further streamlined the public health review process for Cottage Food Operations and improved communication with applicants. Four cottage food workshop presentations were provided assisting new operations in becoming permitted along with conference calls with stakeholders.
- Between May and December, 2014, 112 USDA Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) audit reviews were conducted at grocery store locations after additional staff received audit training from USDA in April.



Key Accomplishments the last 12 months

- Three USDA Specialty Crop Block Grants (SCBG) implemented by the OCO unit were completed September, 2014.
 - The CDC Community Transformation Grant (CTG) work was also completed in 2014 and during this period:
 - 8 Bridging the GAP on-farm food safety events were conducted;
 - 6 Farm to Institution events held with 15 Washington School Districts;
 - 16 producers, 2 distributors as well as 2 webinars for processors; and
 - Individual school consulting work was done.
- The Farm to School pilot project was on-going in 3 School districts in helping to increase produce purchases and use in school meals for 85 schools during 2014.
 - Work also included updating the [on-line tool kit](#), coordinating statewide [Taste Washington Day](#) events, the National Farm to Cafeteria conference and 3 Washington conferences discussing WA farm to school work.
 - Outreach resources developed through these grant projects include:
 - [Bridging the GAPS Farm Guide: Good Agricultural Practices and On-Farm Food Safety for Small, Mid-Sized and Diversified Fruit and Vegetable Farms](#) and on-line tool kit (500 English and 200 Spanish Language copies printed and distributed).
 - [Handbook for Small and Direct Marketing Farms: Regulations and Strategies for Farm and Food Businesses](#), 2014 edition (6,250 print hard copies and online access).
 - [Washington Harvest Poster Set – 20 full-color posters](#), each highlighting a Washington-grown fruit or vegetable, with THRIVE, GROW, and EAT facts to highlight nutrition, agriculture and kitchen use for each produce item.
- Two new USDA SCGB cooperative agreements were awarded the fall of 2014 and project manager recruitment was initiated before the end of the year for the Local Buying Mission project which begins in 2015. A USDA Farm to School Conference grant was awarded and implementation began in December 2014. OCO assisted with applying for and receiving one new USDA cooperative agreement being implemented by the Organic Program and five continuing FDA cooperative agreements related to food and feed safety work.
- OCO staff spoke at: the Washington State Farmer Market Association Conference, the Northwest Food Safety and Sanitation Conference, the NW Inland Palouse Conference, the Washington State Tilth Producers Conference, the WSDA Recall Workshop, Focus on Farming Conference and numerous Cultivating Success workshops across the state.
- OCO staff attended the Association of Food and Drug Officials Annual Education Conference, the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, the Association of American Feed Control Officials mid-year meeting and Administrator’s Seminar, the Northwest Food Processor’s EXPO and the Northwest Food Safety and Sanitation Conference.
- OCO staff continues to participate on the Rapid Response Team and assist the FS&CS Division and agency on food and feed hazard emergencies and incidents.



Future changes in the internal or external environment that could impact customers and program services

- The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) will continue to be implemented by FDA and this will impact WSDA and stakeholders as new federal rules are released. How WSDA will be fully impacted is dependent on the final federal rule language and the timeframe in which FDA enforces any new rule. Educational outreach will be needed by medium and small producer/processor operations and WSDA will be looking for opportunities to partner with FDA, state, local, extension and industry groups to help provide training and outreach where possible. New federal requirements will cause WSDA to review and possibly change how state food safety laws are implemented and the OCO unit will be working across the FS&CS Division to assist with any such changes.
- The FDA MFRPS work will continue as we move to a Quality Management System and strive to achieve all 10 standards of the MFRPS program. The OCO will continue to work on reviewing FS&CS and agency protocols across the division and we will be working with the Microbiology Lab, the Food Assistance and the Organic programs on compliance and outreach work this next year.
- OCO is working to have a new feed licensing and registration database system developed that will modernize our application process and will eliminate a number of outdated database processes. Once a firm is selected out the RFP process, staff time will need to be dedicated towards that IT development work.
- The new FDA Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards (AFRPS) will be accessed in 2015 and will be used to strategize where WSDA may be able to apply lessons learned from our MFRPS work.
- New cooperative agreements or grants may require new skill-sets for any new project work that is awarded to WSDA.

Partnerships and Linkages that shape the program

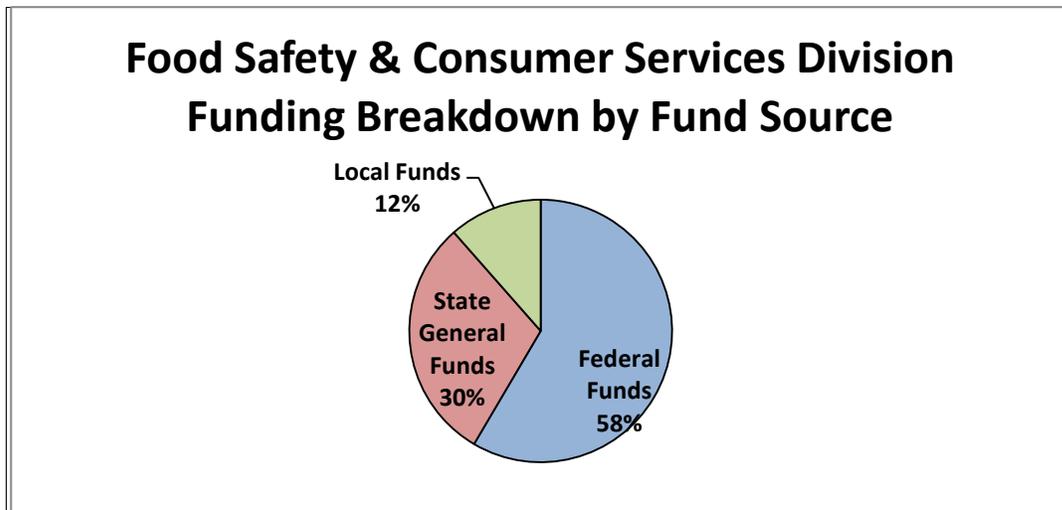
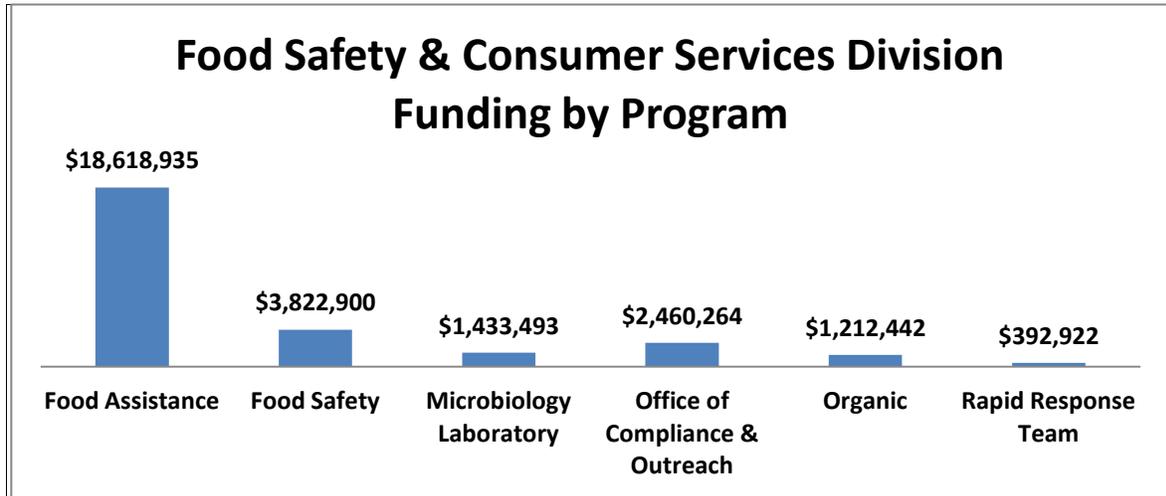
- The OCO works in partnership within the FS&CS Division, the Commodity Division (especially the Fruit and Vegetable Program), the Pesticide Management Division and across WSDA. We work with our State Health and Local Health agencies, USDA, FDA and Office for Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), WSU and extension staff, as well as numerous industry stakeholder groups.

LEAN Update

- The OCO used LEAN principles to further streamline the Cottage Food Permit public health review process using a software application tool. LEAN principles were used to streamline the compliance case follow up work between OCO and the Food Safety Program.



Fiscal Information for FS&CS Annual Report



Program	% Local Funds	% State – General Fund	% Federal Funds
Food Assistance	0%	28%	72%
Food Safety Program	17%	57%	26%
Microbiology Laboratory	0%	59%	41%
Office of Compliance & Outreach	62%	5%	33%
Organic Program	85%	0%	15%
Rapid Response Program	0%	0%	100%



Moving into 2015

- 2015 will be an exciting year for our Division; our goal will be to continue the momentum we have achieved in improving the services we provide. Funding at all levels (fees, federal and state) will continue to be a challenge as we look at supporting our work and programs into the future. We must also continue to be adaptive to changes and challenges when they arise by positioning ourselves to take advantage of opportunities when presented to us, weathering challenging times and never being satisfied with the status quo.

Customer Satisfaction

- Our Division's culture is based on continuous improvement of our role in supporting a strong and vibrant agricultural economy and community in our state during 2015 and beyond.
 - ✓ Placing emphases on evaluating how the delivery of our services can meet the changing needs and expectations of our customers.
 - ✓ Upgrades to data systems throughout the Division to give our customers direct access to licensing and registration information.
 - ✓ Our decisions are data driven and based on making continuous improvement to the services we provide.
 - ✓ Identifying areas where businesses struggle with non-compliance and provide additional education and outreach to reduce non-compliance actions in the future. "We educate before we regulate".
 - ✓ Active participation with industry groups (organic growers, dairy farmers, raw milk producers, food processors, assistance coalitions, etc) on the local, state and federal levels to help our programs understand industry needs and concerns.

Employee Satisfaction

- Above all else we demand and practice our two principal core values. Striving each day to respect each other and our decisions are based on 'we' and not 'me'. During the upcoming year, we will strive to ensure WSDA is a great place to work, the sharing of ideas and creative thinking is encouraged and our work is based on the respect of each other.
 - ✓ Modeling a culture of innovation and creativity at all levels of the division.
 - ✓ Encouraging and promoting continued education to support personal and professional growth.
 - ✓ Utilizing hiring practices to identify and place the right people in the right jobs.
 - ✓ Ensuring every team member within the division goes home each night safe and healthy.

Opportunities

- Ensuring the culture of our Division is flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities when presented. While at the same time solid and grounded enough to weather times of crises and challenges facing our agricultural community.
 - ✓ Implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act and related rules will provide new opportunities to expand programs and support to the agricultural community.
 - ✓ Utilizing funding opportunities from the new Farm Bill for education and outreach to support a new generation of farmers and jobs related to agriculture and food processing.
 - ✓ To support efforts in providing healthy foods to all segments of our population and increasing food security for all Washingtonians.
 - ✓ Promote and support new and growing opportunities for organic growers, organic processors and organic markets in Washington.

"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often." – Winston Churchill

Acronyms

APHA	American Public Health Association
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CDFA	California Department of Food and Agriculture
COOL	USDA Country of Origin Labeling
COTS	Commercial Off-the-Shelf
CSFP	Commodity Supplemental Food Program
DNR	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
DOH	Washington State Department of Health
EFAP	Emergency Food Assistance Program
FAP	Food Assistance Program (WSDA)
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FERN	Food Emergency Response Network
FERP	Food Emergency Response Plan
FPTF	Washington State Food Protection Task Force
FMSA	Washington State Farmer Market Association
FSO	Field Safety Officer
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
Grants SEA-DO	FDA Seattle District Office
ICS	Incident Command Structure
ISO	International Standardization Organization
LHJ	Local health jurisdictions
LIMS	Laboratory Information Management System
MIE	Marijuana Infused Edibles
MDP	USDA's Microbiological Data Program
MFRPS	FDA's Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standard
NOI	Notice of Infraction
NOP	National Organic Program
OCO	Office of Compliance and Outreach
OMRI	Organic Material Review Institute (WSDA)
OSPI	Office for Superintendent of Public Instruction
PI	Program Index, which is an account identifier for budgeting purposes
PISCES	Internal computer program/timekeeping system
RMA	USDA Risk Management Agency grant
RRT	Rapid Response Team (WSDA)
SCBG	USDA Specialty Crop Block
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TEFAP	The Emergency Food Assistance Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WSDA	Washington State Department of Agriculture
WSU	Washington State University

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