

CPS awards \$2.1 million to twelve projects

Davis, California, October 6, 2011 – The Center for Produce Safety (CPS) at the University of California, Davis today announced the award of 12 new grants for research to help mitigate food safety risks associated with growing and harvesting fresh produce.

The broad range of the projects reflects the commitment of CPS's Partners in Research (PIR), which includes a cross section of public and private partners. To date, CPS has funded 54 projects valued at \$9.2 million. The awards today resulted from a CPS request for proposals issued in February. The awards were made possible by matching funds provided by PIR members:

California Department of Food and Agriculture www.cdfa.ca.gov
Washington State Department of Agriculture www.agr.wa.gov
Almond Board of California www.almondboard.com
California Cantaloupe Advisory Board www.cmr.org
California Melon Research Board www.cmr.org
California Leafy Greens Research Program www.calgreens.org
California Pistachio Research Program californiapistachioresearchboard.com
California Strawberry Commission www.calstrawberry.com
California Walnut Commission www.walnuts.org
Florida Tomato Committee www.floridatomatoes.org
Taylor Farms www.taylorfarms.com
Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission <http://www.treefruitresearch.com/>
Wegmans Family Charitable Foundation www.wegmans.com

"The research being conducted at CPS is applicable to all points of the supply chain - farmers, shippers, handlers and consumers. CPS's collaboration with its partners in research (PIR) demonstrates what is possible when we work together to share knowledge to help keep fresh produce safe," said Stephen Patricio, CPS Advisory Board chairman.

The CPS Technical Committee, working with technical experts from PIR organizations, reviewed 49 proposals, the highest number of proposals received in response to its annual request for proposals since the initial RFP in 2008. The CPS Technical Committee is an advisory group that includes experts from industry, academia, government and non-governmental organizations.

Research work on these 12 new projects begins in January 2012:

Apple growing and packing microbial risk factors and their potential to lead to foodborne disease outbreaks. Richard Pleus, Intertox, Inc.

Assessment of E. coli as an indicator of microbial quality of irrigation water use for produce. Channah Rock, University of Arizona

Comparative assessment of field survival of Salmonella enterica and E. coli O157:H7 on cilantro (Coriandrum sativum) in relation to sequential cutting and re-growth. Trevor Suslow, University of California, Davis

Distribution of Salmonella in pistachios and development of effective sampling strategies. Linda Harris, University of California, Davis

Evaluation of sampling protocol to provide science-based metrics for use in identification of Salmonella in irrigation water testing programs in mixed produce farms in the Suwannee River watershed. George Vellidis, University of Georgia

Glucosinolate-derived compounds as a green manure for controlling E. coli O157:H7 and Salmonella in soil. Jitendra Patel, USDA-ARS

Sanitization of soft fruits with ultraviolet (UV-C) light. Xuetong Fan, USDA-ARS

Sources and mechanisms of transfer of Salmonella in the production and postharvest tree nut environment. Linda Harris, University of California, Davis

The role of riparian zones in bacteria dispersal to produce farms. Martin Wiedmann, Cornell University

Toward a rapid and reliable pathogen detection system in produce. Beilei Ge, Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration

Validating Salmonella inactivation during thermal processing of the physically heat-treated chicken litter as soil amendment and organic fertilizer. Xiuping Jiang, Clemson University

Validation of testing methods for the detection and quantification of E. coli O157:H7, Salmonella spp., fecal coliforms and non-pathogenic E. coli in compost. Manan Sharma, USDA-ARS

"The scope and quality of this year's awardees is truly remarkable. These new programs really compliment research from our first three years at CPS and provide depth from which our stakeholders can develop science-based food safety programs," said CPS Technical Committee chairman, Robert Whitaker.

CDFA

The California Department of Food and Agriculture protects and promotes California's agricultural industry. California's farmers and ranchers produce a safe, secure supply of food, fiber and shelter; marketed fairly for all Californians and produced with responsible environmental stewardship. www.cdffa.gov

WSDA

The Washington State Department of Agriculture serves the people of Washington by supporting the agricultural community and promoting consumer and environmental protection. Its staff carries out a broad spectrum of activities that support the producers, distributors, and consumers of Washington's food and agricultural products. <http://agr.wa.gov>

Almond Board of California

The Almond Board of California serves to promote the best quality product and increase production of almonds, California's largest tree crop. <http://www.almondboard.com/>

CLGRP

The California Leafy Greens Research Program provides research programs and expands research efforts for iceberg lettuce, leaf lettuce, spinach and spring mix. <http://www.calgreens.org/>

California Pistachio Research Program

The California Pistachio Research Program funds research on pistachio propagation, production, harvesting, handling and preparation for market as well as provide educational opportunities and materials for pistachio growers. <http://californiapistachioresearchboard.web.officelive.com/default.aspx>

Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission

The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission was established to promote and carry on research and administer specific industry service programs which will or may benefit the planting, production, harvesting, handling, processing or shipment of tree fruit of the state. <http://www.treefruitresearch.com/>

About CPS

The Center for Produce Safety is focused exclusively on providing the produce industry and government with open access to the actionable information required to continually enhance the safety produce. Established by public and private partnership at the University of California, Davis, CPS funds original research; is creating a researchable database of global produce safety research; and will develop industry training and outreach programs. Initial funding for CPS was provided by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the University of California, the Produce Marketing Association and Taylor Farms. <http://cps.ucdavis.edu>
