

Center for Produce Safety Looks to the Future

Davis, CA, July 17, 2013 – The Center for Produce Safety Board of Directors has completed a review of the CPS strategic plan. Through a survey of industry stakeholders, CPS received strong support to continue funding research and bringing industry together to address current food safety issues (as was done after the *Listeria monocytogenes* outbreak in cantaloupe and, more recently, the wash water validation meeting). The review of the strategic plan was a key item of discussion at the CPS Board of Directors meeting in June.

Following the meeting, Steve Patricio, president of Westside Produce and chair of the CPS board, stated, “The success of the Center for Produce Safety can be directly attributed to those who have volunteered time and resources to support a collaborative research effort. As we look to the future at CPS it will take time, talent and monetary support to continue those efforts. The CPS board remains vigilant in directing funds to maximize food safety knowledge.” Patricio continued, “We heard clearly at the 2013 symposium that CPS research is making a difference. While the body of knowledge continues to grow, there remain a number of produce safety issues that must be addressed.”

In planning for the future Patricio has appointed Dr. Jim Gorny, vice president of food safety for the Produce Marketing Association, as chair of the CPS Technical Committee. Dr. Bob Whitaker, who has served as chair of the technical committee since the center’s inception, will continue as a member of the CPS Technical Committee and Board of Directors and will hold an important role in the implementation of the CPS strategic plan. Bryan Silbermann, president of the Produce Marketing Association, commented, “PMA is committed to expanding the industry’s knowledge on food safety and is honored to support the involvement of its staff at the Center for Produce Safety. The center’s collaborative process has proven to be an effective and important tool for the produce industry.”

Tim York, president of Markon Cooperative and past chair of CPS, led the strategic planning process. York remarked, “We have run a very lean program at CPS and have had great success. Through the strategic planning process it was apparent that the success of the symposium and the implementation of research findings indicated a need for the industry to expand its outreach efforts and secure additional funds to continue critical research. It will take a supply chain effort to fund the future endeavors of CPS.”

The CPS Board of Directors is committed to filling produce safety knowledge gaps. The industry is encouraged to contact CPS staff, board members, or technical committee members with research priorities, outreach ideas and funding resources. CPS research projects and events are posted on the CPS website, <http://cps.ucdavis.edu>.

About CPS

The Center for Produce Safety (CPS) is focused exclusively on providing the produce industry and government with open access to the actionable information needed to continually enhance the safety of produce. Established by public and private partnership at the University of California, Davis, initial funding for CPS was provided by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the University of California, Produce Marketing Association and Taylor Farms. Ongoing administrative costs are covered by the Produce Marketing Association, enabling industry and public funds to go exclusively to research.