

**When Diverse
Minds Meet,
Produce Safety
Benefit**





cps CENTER *for* PRODUCE SAFETY

**Fund Science.
Find Solutions.
Fuel Change.**

About CPS

We are a unique partnership: The 501(c)(3) nonprofit Center for Produce Safety brings together diverse leaders from industry, government, and the scientific and academic communities, to work collectively toward the common goal of enhancing fresh produce food safety.

That's all about the science: CPS funds credible, independent research worldwide that provides science-based produce safety solutions that can be implemented in the real world.

Knowledge closes the loop: CPS then transfers that knowledge and tools to industry and other stakeholders through our annual Research Symposium, our website, webinars, guest columns in key trade press outlets and other outreach.

We do more together than we ever could apart

That reality is why Center for Produce Safety was set up as a public-private partnership in 2007. Today, by ensuring industry, government and academia have a seat at the table, CPS ensures that our fresh produce food-safety solutions are science based and field ready.

This report features a range of voices, illustrating how CPS’s diverse community helps achieve our mission to *fund science, find solutions and fuel change*. They are a distinguished group: two producers, a retail leader, California’s secretary of food and agriculture, and the head of the Canada’s Food Safety and Consumer Protection Directorate. I thank them for their contributions, to this report and to CPS.



“Center for Produce Safety’s work has never been more important. By giving to CPS, you’ll be investing in the future of your business – and the future of our industry.”

I have been honored to serve as chair of this venerable young institution for the past couple of years. We learned a lot during the pandemic about how to “be together” to advance CPS’s vital work. I am certain our next chair, Joe Pezzini of Taylor Farms, will maintain the continuity of leadership that has served CPS well for almost 15 years.

CPS’s work has never been more important. It continues to be noticed, most recently in a June 28, 2022, *Forbes* column. Thank you to our volunteers for getting us here; your work feeds our results. And thank you to our contributors; your support fuels the success stories outlined in this report.

I encourage you to give to Center for Produce Safety today. You’ll be investing in the future of your business – and the future of our industry.

Vic Smith

Chair, 2021 CPS Board of Directors
 President and CEO, J.V. Smith Companies
 Silver Level contributor to CPS

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When diverse minds meet, produce safety benefit

Center for Produce Safety unites disparate stakeholders toward a common goal: enhancing fresh produce safety. This meeting of the minds has served produce safety well, as demonstrated by CPS's key accomplishments in 2021.

Funding diverse science

To answer industry's urgent produce safety questions, in 2021 CPS launched [14 new research projects](#) on a range of topics.

- **Needs-driven:** To identify science gaps stalling industry, Technical Committee members queried supply chain leaders.
- **Science-based:** Those dialogues helped CPS define our 2021 research priorities, and [call for research pre-proposals](#).
- **Diverse topics:** CPS requested proposals on topics across supply chain sectors, including organic.
- **Designed to succeed:** Committee and other volunteers dissected 47 pre-proposals, and helped researchers strengthen their final proposals.
- **Answers now:** Funded projects will be completed quickly, in one to two years.



Kevin Mis Solval, Ph.D.'s [proof-of-concept project](#) demonstrated that smartphone-based infrared cameras can easily and accurately collect temperatures on fresh produce.

Finding diverse solutions

To add to our produce safety knowledge, CPS-funded researchers completed 13 research projects in 2021.

- **Critical topics:** They added to our knowledge about treating ag water, controlling *Listeria* and other pathogens, and harnessing new technologies such as ultra-fine bubble technology and infrared smartphone cameras.¹
- **Crossing boundaries:** These researchers hailed from varied fields of science, across America and around the world. Their findings apply across the fresh produce supply chain.
- **Aided by diverse voices:** Technical Committee members met regularly with researchers to guide them. Industry partners donated their knowledge, product and equipment.

¹ See: [Allende, RFP year 2019](#); [Dawson 2019](#); [Deng 2019](#); [Diez-Gonzalez 2020](#); [Fridman 2019](#); [Mattioli 2019](#); [Mis Solval 2020](#); [Ortega 2019](#); [Phan-Thien 2020](#); [Rock 2020](#); [Ryser 2018](#); [Sanchez Moragas 2019](#); [Upadhyay 2020](#)



Channah Rock, Ph.D.'s team [reported](#) at CPS's 2021 Research Symposium that treating irrigation water can eliminate the risk that pathogens might contaminate fresh produce in the field.

Fueling diverse change

To help industry and other stakeholders enhance produce safety, in 2021 CPS shared our research learnings through a range of channels:

- Open-access Research Symposium:** The center's seminal learning event was again conducted virtually. Five symposium webinars were held at no cost to attendees, thanks to generous event sponsors. Webinar recordings and key learnings are available free on CPS's website.
- Reaching record audiences:** A record 1,500+ people took part in these and other webinars throughout the year.
- Email updates:** CPS continued to deliver our popular research updates to diverse subscribers.
- In the news:** CPS volunteer leaders published columns conveying research learnings in leading produce industry media outlets. Industry trade press also extensively reported CPS research news.



Spain's Ana Allende, Ph.D., tested the ability of various surface treatments to reduce pathogens on a range of fresh-cut fruits and veggies.

CPS by the numbers*

TO DATE:

Annual Research Program Projects:

212

Rapid Response Projects:

9

Research Institutions:

48

Countries:

5

Funds Invested:

\$40.6 million

Principal Investigators Funded:

115

Students Introduced to Industry:

1,000

2021 Research Symposium Participants:

1,500+

* Data as of June 2022

CPS research projects by category*

PATHOGEN PERSISTENCE:

46 projects
\$7.5 million



PATHOGEN TRANSFERENCE:

26 projects
\$7.1 million



LISTERIA:

30 projects
\$5.8 million



AG WATER:

45 projects
\$9.2 million



TOOLS:

35 projects
\$6.9 million



WASH WATER:

19 projects
\$3.8 million



* Data as of June 2022

We invited a range of voices to comment on CPS's 2021 work: Two producers, a major food retailer, California's secretary of food and agriculture, and Canada's food safety and consumer protection directorate head.

They all reinforced the value of CPS's diverse community: Many and varied voices guide CPS's research program. The resulting science works in the real world. When industry and regulators work together, produce safety benefits. Our produce safety needs will only increase; so CPS is cultivating our next generation of science talent.



In 2021, CPS's Technical Committee advised funded researchers' ongoing projects by Zoom because of the ongoing pandemic. Shown in 2018: Committee members Jennifer Clarke with California Leafy Greens Research Board (far left) and Barry Eisenberg (far right) visit with Amanda Lathrop, Ph.D., (second from right) and her research team at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Banegas: CPS Volunteer Input Ensures Research Outputs

More than a few brows furrowed across the fresh produce industry when Center for Produce Safety was established as a public-private partnership back in 2007. Could industry, academia, government, public health and other stakeholder volunteers come together to enhance fresh produce food safety? Time shows the answer is a clear "yes".

A textbook example is CPS's Technical Committee, which guides CPS's research program. To identify CPS's research priorities each year, this multidisciplinary team queries industry about their burning produce-safety questions. All 52 committee members bring their unique perspectives to robust conversations about research needs. The science gaps they expose inform CPS's annual research priorities, which drives CPS's annual call for research.

The committee's diversity also proves valuable when helping researchers refine promising projects into final proposals.



"CPS is the right organization to get to the bottom of the hottest topics in the shortest amount of time."

TONY BANEGAS
Bonduelle Fresh Americas and
CPS Technical Committee



"Where I might feel like a proposal makes sense from industry's perspective, one of our academics can understand and inform the researchers' proposed methodology," says committee member Tony Banegas, vice president of food safety and industry relations for Bonduelle Fresh Americas. The company is a Bronze Level contributor to CPS. "The proposals we approve are the ones our diverse group feels will succeed."

Once funded, researchers continue to benefit from Technical Committee input. That can include answering questions that arise, and making connections to arrange the support they need. "We remain hands on," says Banegas.

To transfer CPS research learnings to industry and other produce safety stakeholders, Technical Committee members get hands-on. At our annual Research Symposium, committee members serve as session emcees and discussion leaders. They also lead and participate in webinars, and byline articles transmitting research learnings.

Because of CPS's culture of diversity, "CPS is the right organization to get to the bottom of the hottest topics in the shortest amount of time," says Banegas.

A version of this article first appeared in Produce Processing.

Klose to Industry: “Don’t Let CPS Research Intimidate You”

This story stars a frog, the Pacific tree frog. While it’s not a fairy tale, Susanne Klose, Ph.D., still needed a happy ending. So she turned to Center for Produce Safety.

Our story’s frogs intruded on lettuce fields and ended up in bags of salad mixes. That created a food safety hazard, a disconcerting discovery for consumers and an economic loss for fresh produce companies.

Klose is senior director of research and development at Church Brothers Farms and a member of CPS’s Technical Committee. The company is a Bronze Level contributor to CPS. She was working for a different produce company at the time. She and her team tried various ways to exclude amphibians from lettuce fields, with little success. Klose turned to CPS for help. [CPS-funded research](#) completed by University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s Paul C. Davidson, Ph.D., demonstrated that fencing with a horizontal lip is an effective obstacle; sticky-footed frogs cannot climb over the lip.

Using that research, Klose ranked ranches to receive a targeted investment in mitigation measures. Lipped fencing was installed at high-risk locations, significantly reducing the incidence of frogs in their salads.

This is just one example, says Klose, of the practical resources available from CPS to every fresh produce company, small and large.

Klose recommends accessing the plethora of CPS resources – certainly the website, but also attending [CPS’s annual Research Symposium](#), tapping into the [key learnings](#) published after each event, and listening to [CPS webinars](#) or recordings. “I bring key learnings back to my company,” she says.

Start with CPS research findings, says Klose, then translate the science into business solutions that fit your company’s unique circumstances.



“Don’t let CPS research intimidate you. The CPS website is very easy to navigate. You can also ask CPS staff or contact the researchers for help.”

SUSANNE KLOSE, Ph.D.
*Church Brothers Farms and
CPS Technical Committee*

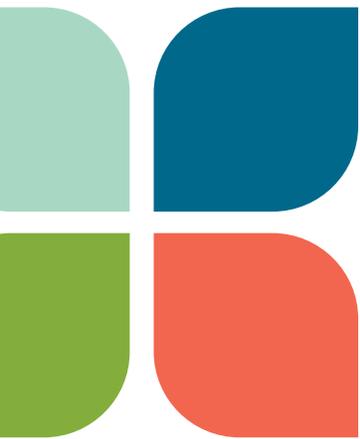
Although some safety considerations are overarching, others are very specific to a region, a commodity, even a ranch, she notes.

Klose appreciates the demographic and geographic diversity of the CPS community, including volunteer leaders and researchers from around the world. And, she notes, CPS researchers come at research from a broad range of fields – Davidson, for example, is a biologist. Other CPS-funded researchers include food scientists, parasitologists, engineers, even mathematicians.

Together, says Klose, this wealth of expertise results in fresh produce food safety solutions that work for our industry. That’s a happy ending for all of us.



An example of fencing with a horizontal lip.



Canada's Switucha: When Industry and Regulators Come Together, Produce Safety Benefits

For Tammy Switucha, fresh produce food safety starts with a conversation – and having the right people at the table. Providing a safe space for such conversations is a key benefit of the Center for Produce Safety, she reports.

Switucha is executive director of Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Food Safety and Consumer Protection Directorate, and a CPS board director.

"CPS offers a safe place for industry stakeholders and regulators to discuss risks associated with fresh produce," Switucha says. "I'm impressed with CPS's commitment to consumer safety with the research we fund and do."

The center enables a two-way exchange with regulators, Switucha says. "We pass on our [regulatory] expectations and requirements. But we are also



"CPS offers a safe place for industry stakeholders and regulators to meet and discuss risks associated with fresh produce."

TAMMY SWITUCHA
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

learning, so we can incorporate the latest research into our regulations and support for industry. We want to know whether ... research is actually working to reduce risk."

Switucha encourages other regulators to engage with CPS. "Being at the table was very important to us in Canada because we import a lot of produce," she says. "Having a say about

what needs to happen for that trade to happen is very important."

Switucha also appreciates having the full supply chain involved. "We have growers, packers, transporters, processors, and I'm pleased to see more retailers joining CPS," she says. This takes CPS conversations from the academic to real world.

"What stands out to me is how CPS turns the research we've invested in into something practical for industry," she notes, pointing to [CPS's Annual Research Symposium](#), [webinars](#) and [reports](#).

For Switucha, Center for Produce Safety's greatest contribution is the relationships born from the open, honest conversations the center has enabled about the vital issue of fresh produce food safety.

"Everyone needs to be a part of the solution," she says.



Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Art Liang, M.D. (left) talks with industry members at CPS's 2019 Research Symposium. The 2021 symposium was held virtually.

California's Ross: "Produce Safety Needs Will Only Increase"

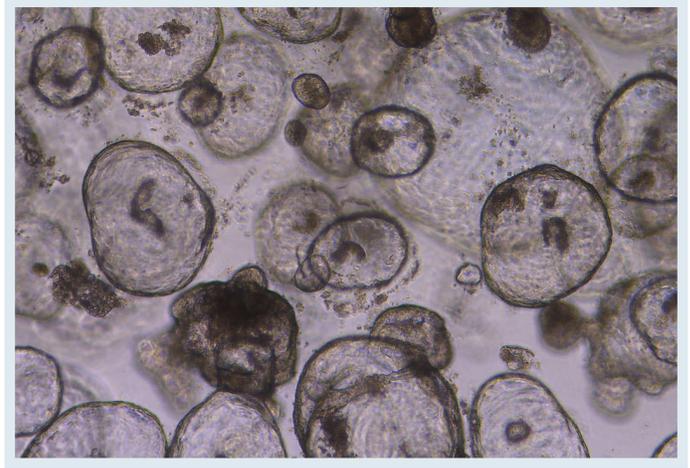
Center for Produce Safety relies on diverse funding sources to finance our research program. Generous industry contributions are frequently in the news; less well-known, but equally important, are grants that fresh produce-centric state governments direct to CPS.

Karen Ross, secretary of California Department of Food and Agriculture, is passionate about making a difference in fresh produce food safety. She believes strongly in tapping the federal Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to advance the food safety of her state's specialty crop industry.

"When I became secretary, we knew we needed research to enhance [produce safety] understanding and to fill gaps, and we needed to get that information into hands of growers, shippers, packers, processors, distributors and retailers," she says. Through its [block grant program](#), from 2009 to 2021 California funded \$21.2 million in produce-specific food safety research, in the form of matching grants. Those funds doubled what CPS could have done on our own.

"The safety landscape is constantly evolving," Ross says. "California has 400 commodities, and it's especially challenging to determine how to best use the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program funding. We use listening sessions and stakeholder outreach to help guide and focus this process. And the feedback we get reinforces the idea that it makes sense to target funding for food safety because the research results serve such a large part of agricultural producers."

Ross appreciates that CPS unites voices from industry, government and academia, ensuring a diversity of viewpoints and a multidisciplinary approach to CPS's work.



Specialty Crop Block Grants from state governments have financed numerous CPS research projects, including Malak Esseli, Ph.D.'s [evaluation of human norovirus](#) (shown here) in ag water and on leafy greens.



"Our needs around produce safety will only increase. We will have ongoing needs for research, solutions and improvement."

KAREN ROSS
California Department of Food and Agriculture

She has reached out to her colleagues, encouraging them to use the block grant program to fund research into practical produce safety solutions in their states. "We can put all these solutions in a toolbox, and transfer that knowledge for practical applications in the field – all open platform, available to everyone," she says.

Ross notes that the U.S. farm bill, which funds the federal Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, is up for renewal in 2022. And produce safety rules will continue to evolve, especially as more Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) implementation regulations are expected. Maintaining the ability to [research produce safety](#) and deliver

learnings to industry will continue to be critical, Ross says.

"Our needs around produce safety will only increase as states, government and industry face funding, training, audit readiness and more for FSMA," Ross says. "Block grants and the work they enable are an important topic as we address the next farm bill. We will have ongoing needs for research, solutions and improvement."

H-E-B's Frederick Offers Advice on Finding, Cultivating Science Talent

Center for Produce Safety has developed a reputation for bringing together today's diverse stakeholders to work toward the goal of enhancing fresh produce food safety. At the same time, we are also working to cultivate the next generation of science talent, for tomorrow's community.

For several years, CPS has worked to level up the skills of young scientists assisting our researchers. They already know CPS and understand produce safety; we round out their STEM skills with leadership, communication and business etiquette skills.

A leading food retailer notes this training better prepares these scientists for careers from the laboratory to the produce department, and the supply chain links and stakeholders in between.

Tammi Frederick, H-E-B's vice president of quality assurance and food safety, spoke about attracting science talent during a CPS Executive Conversation for industry contributors. H-E-B is a Bronze Level contributor to CPS; Frederick's colleague Danielle Mesa serves on CPS's Technical Committee.

"Having the technical science degree is a point of entry," says Frederick. "But we also need talent who can work with people, influence people, as well as impact and drive results. It takes a combination of the technical



"Having the technical science degree is a point of entry. But we also need talent who can work with people, influence people, and impact and drive results."

TAMMI FREDERICK
H-E-B

skills along with the soft skills to be successful in these roles."

CPS's Professional Development Program has simple origins. Funded researchers' students received travel grants to assist at our annual Research Symposium. There, they learned the latest produce safety science, and gained additional perspective by networking with attendees.

Reimagined in 2021 and sponsored partly by Bayer, today's program for Ph.D. candidates, postdoctoral researchers and master's program students adds virtual coaching sessions and mentoring,

CPS's vision: The scientists who choose research careers are better prepared to design effective research, and to transfer learnings from the laboratory to industry. Those who come to work in industry can more effectively communicate produce safety science to their business teams, lead their companies through challenging situations, and ultimately influence change.

This is invaluable to industry, notes H-E-B's Frederick.

"Most of the stakeholders we're working with every day are not scientists," she says. "It's our food safety team's role to educate our business teams and get their support so we can drive awareness to our supplier base and ensure we deliver a safe, high-quality product to the customer consistently day after day."



Science students assisting at CPS's 2022 Annual Symposium learned the latest produce safety science, and engaged with industry leaders including former CPS board chair Tim York and CPS Technical Committee Chair Drew McDonald (shown left to right).

CPS Researchers Have Diverse Expertise, A Common Goal

From academia to government to foreign research institutions, Center for Produce Safety-funded investigators have diverse expertise. Together, they are generating results the fresh produce industry can use to minimize food safety risks.

In 2021, CPS-funded researchers completed 13 projects on important topics from treating agricultural water¹ and process water² – to controlling *Listeria monocytogenes*³, *Salmonella spp.*⁴ and *Cyclospora*⁵ – to investigating new technologies such as smartphone-based infrared cameras⁶, ultra-fine bubble technology⁷, antimicrobial blue light⁸ and cold plasma⁹. CPS invested over \$3.3 million in these projects.

At Spain's Institute of Agrochemistry and Food Technology, Gloria Sánchez, Ph.D., [led development of tests](#) to detect enteric viruses in fresh-cut produce wash water. She and colleagues then used the tests to screen three commonly-used wash water sanitizers. Two sanitizers – chlorine and chlorine dioxide – proved effective at inactivating viruses.

Sánchez praised CPS's advisory Technical Committee for guiding her group to ensure their research had real-world applications. "Sometimes what happens from a research point of view, our priorities and our ways of thinking are really far away from conditions in the industry," she says.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Mia Mattoli, Ph.D., [looked for *Cyclospora cayetanensis*](#) in Georgia irrigation water and production environments. Good news, they found none in farm ponds or on produce, and only low levels in area sewage sludge.

"I think the goal is to make sure the waste system stays separate from our food system, and we keep those water lines distinct," Mattoli says. "And I think that's what we've seen."

While her project complements *Cyclospora* research conducted in other U.S. regions, Mattoli warns, "I think coming up with over-arching solutions that apply to the entire U.S. may not be the best approach. But that doesn't mean that some of the learnings can't be helpful."

At the same time, Clemson University's Paul Dawson, Ph.D., [modeled growth patterns and transfer of *Listeria* biofilms](#) in stone fruit packinghouses. He credits CPS for helping him obtain unrestricted access to sample the facilities, which was essential to his work.

Dawson's team found fruit wax does not prevent biofilm growth, and chlorine proved to be an ineffective biofilm sanitizer at temperatures common to packinghouses. In a follow-up study underway in 2022, he plans to create a user-friendly Excel program that will predict optimum *Lm* sampling times and sanitation schedules.

While no two farms, packinghouses or processors are the same, the wide array of CPS research projects offers options from which our entire industry can choose to best meet your needs.



Mia Mattoli's team looked for *C. cayetanensis* in Georgia growing region water sources, complementing similar projects around the United States.



On the value of CPS's researcher guidance:
"Sometimes what happens from a research point of view, our priorities and our ways of thinking are really far away from conditions in the industry."

GLORIA SÁNCHEZ, Ph.D.
 Institute of Agrochemistry and Food Technology

For more information on referenced research projects, see the CPS website's "Funded Research Projects" section: (1) [Rock, RFP year 2020](#); (2) [Sanchez Moragas 2019](#); (3) [Allende 2019](#), [Deng 2019](#), [Ryser 2018](#) and [Dawson 2019](#); (4) [Phan-Thien 2020](#); (5) [Ortega 2019](#) and [Mattoli 2019](#); (6) [Mis Solval 2020](#); (7) [Upadhyay 2020](#); (8) [Diez-Gonzalez 2020](#); (9) [Fridman 2019](#).



Good Stewards

Funds in: Center for Produce Safety is funded by diverse public and private sources. Industry funds come from across the fresh produce supply chain, from farm to grocer to foodservice. Public funds come from grants made by major specialty crop-producing states.

Funds out: The vast majority of CPS's funds are spent to sponsor produce safety research, and to transmit key learnings to the many and varied stakeholders of produce safety.



“Producing safe food is our number one priority. CPS funds the science we need to make sense of perplexing food safety challenges. The best part is creating practical solutions that we can apply in our business.”

JOE PEZZINI
Taylor Farms
Diamond Level contributor to CPS
Chair, CPS 2022 Board of Directors

The 2021 Year End Financial Statements, Independent Auditor's Report and accompanying Federal Reports and Schedules are publicly available, in accordance with the Federal Uniform Guidance Requirements for Federal Awards, on CPS's website at www.centerforproducesafety.org.



Research	\$2,970,624	81%
Operational	\$620,344	17%
Symposium	\$79,500	2%
Total Income	\$3,670,468	



Research	\$2,473,411	80%
Operational	\$530,891	17%
Symposium	\$84,950	3%
Total Expenses	\$3,089,252	



Research	\$3,145,325	86%
Operational	\$326,016	9%
Symposium	\$116,574	3%
Total Expenses	\$3,587,915	



Research	\$2,628,103	86%
Operational	\$302,670	10%
Symposium	\$111,905	4%
Total Expenses	\$3,042,678	

2021 Net Income \$82,553

2020 Net Income \$46,574

2021 Contributors

Industry contributors from across the fresh produce supply chain generously support Center for Produce Safety. CPS also receives grants from major specialty crop-producing states including California, Florida, Texas and Washington.

**Current as of July 14, 2022*

Diamond Level Supporters, \$1,000,000+

Taylor Farms
Western Growers

Platinum Level Supporters, \$500,000 - \$999,999

Dole Fresh Vegetables/Dole Food Company
California Citrus Quality Council
Fresh Express

Gold Level Supporters, \$250,000 - \$499,999

California Fresh Fruit Association
Sysco
Tanimura & Antle
Washington State Tree Fruit Association

Silver Level Supporters, \$100,000 - \$249,999

Lipman Family Farms
California Cantaloupe Advisory Board/California Melon Research Board
JV Smith Companies
Promotora Agricola El Toro
Western Precooling
Grimmway Farms/Cal-Organic
Wawona Frozen Foods
McEntire Produce, Inc.
Costco Wholesale
Driscoll's
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association
Food Safety Net Services (FSNS)
The Giumarra Companies
GreenGate Fresh
iFoodDecisionSciences, Inc.
Markon Cooperative, Inc.
Mexican Hass Avocado Importers Association
Mission Produce, Inc.
organicgirl
Pacific International Marketing
Robinson Fresh
Steinbeck Country Produce
The Produce News

Bronze-Plus Level Supporters, \$50,000 to \$99,999

International Fresh Produce Association
The Oppenheimer Group
Bayer
Bonduelle Fresh Americas
California Avocado Commission
DiMare Fresh



“Fresh produce safety is an industry priority because protecting public health is essential. Our industry must work together to continually push ourselves to find answers to critical produce safety questions. We value participation with CPS because it allows us to be part of a larger effort.”

JOHN GURRISI

*Fresh Express
CPS Platinum Level contributor*

GoodFarms
H-E-B
L&M Companies
Meijer
New York Apple Association
The Wegman Family Charitable Foundation
Food Safety News

Bronze Level Supporters, up to \$49,999

Church Brothers Farms
Coastline Family Farms, Inc.
Little Bear Produce
Texas International Produce Association
Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Inc.
Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association
International Paper
Vesta Foodservice
Diversified Restaurant Systems, Inc.
Florida Tomato Committee
Pasquinelli Produce Co.
IEH Laboratories & Consulting Group
Tyger Sales and Marketing, LLC
Wish Farms
National Watermelon Association
Azzule/PrimusLabs
Blue Book Services, Inc.
Primus Labs
Pacific Ag Pak, Inc

THANK YOU

CPS Board of Directors

The diverse volunteer members of Center for Produce Safety's Board of Directors keep us laser focused on our mission: Fund science. Find solutions. Fuel change. List is current as of Dec. 31, 2021.

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J.V. Smith Companies

Samir Assar
U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Jim Brennan
SmartWash Solutions, LLC

Dave Corsi, Past Chair*
Wegmans Food Markets

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Natalie Dyenson
Dole Food Company, Inc.

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J & D Produce, Inc.

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Craig Hedberg
University of Minnesota School of Public Health

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Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Jim Lugg
Consultant

Steve Martori
Martori Farms

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Tammy Switucha
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Max Teplitski
International Fresh Produce Association

Craig Wilson
Costco Wholesale

Timothy York
California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

** denotes Executive Committee members*



“Today, it is not what government does but what farm-to-table companies do that ensures the safety of fresh produce. CPS’s focus is on research that will result in improvements that are within reach for companies today... along with getting the word out in a way that the entire industry can understand and benefit”

ART LIANG, M.D.

Center for Disease Control & Prevention and liaison to CPS Board of Directors

CPS Technical Committee

This eclectic group of subject matter experts ensures that CPS-funded research is practical, measurable and translatable to the real world. List is current as of Dec. 31, 2021.

Drew McDonald, Chair
Taylor Fresh Foods

Rebecca Anderson
GLOBALG.A.P. North America

Tony Banegas
Bonduelle - Ready Pac

Jim Brennan
SmartWash Solutions, LLC

Donna Lynn Browne
Naturipe Farms, LLC

Matthew Burke
Sysco Quality Assurance

Jennifer Clarke
California Leafy Greens Research Board

De Ann Davis
Western Growers Association

Suresh DeCosta
Lipman Family Farms

Pascal Delaquis
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Barry Eisenberg
Industry Consultant

Thea Eubanks
organicgirl, LLC

Robert Gravani
Cornell University

Emily Griep
International Fresh Produce Association

John Gurrisi
Fresh Express

Maha Hajmeer
California Department of Public Health

Tim Jackson
Industry Consultant

Jessica Jones
Chick-fil-A

Lianna Kelly
U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Susanne Klose
Church Brothers Farms

Greg Komar
California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

Sharan Lanini
Industry Consultant

Jim Lugg
Industry Consultant

Afreen Malik
Western Growers Association

Robert Mandrell
Research Scientist

Johnny Massa
Comgro

Jennifer McEntire
International Fresh Produce Association

Michael Menes
True Organic Products

Danielle Mesa
H-E-B

Bob Mills
RSM Food Safety Service

Anne Morrell
Columbia Fruit Packers

Joelle Mosso
Eurofins US

Gurmail Mudahar
Tanimura & Antle

Takashi Nakamura
Del Monte Fresh Produce N.A., Inc

George Nikolich
George Nikolich Consulting, Inc

Monica Noble
80 Acres Farms

Elis Owens
Birko - A Diversey Company

Courtney Parker
E.&J. Gallo Winery

Kinsey Porter
North Bay Produce

Walter Ram
The Giumarra Companies

Angie Ramirez
Triangle Farms, Inc./JV Farms Organic, LLC

Keith Refsnider
Driscoll's

Joan Rosen
JC Rosen Resources

Vicki Scott
Scott Resources/Arizona Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

Gurjit Shergill
Industry Consultant

Rusbelina Silva
4Earth Farms

Stacy Stoltenberg
Hygiena

Will Strand
Rainier Fruit Company

Steve Strub
Wegmans Food Markets

Derek Tweedy
Domex Superfresh Growers

Jeremy Vanderzyl
Duncan Family Farms

Rich Walsh
ECOLAB

Fresh ideas

In Center for Produce Safety’s early days, the graphic you see here was printed in our Board of Directors’ meeting books. This visual hangs in my office now, for good reason: Its anti-status quo mantra captures CPS’s commitment to steadily fostering new ideas – including giving any good idea a fair shot.

You can see that commitment in our work at a macro level.



For example, we’ve continuously improved how we approach our produce-centric research priorities – such as calling for research by supply chain sector in 2021. That will philosophically impact our research program for years. We’ve also slowly, respectfully evolved how we engage our diverse community of produce safety stakeholders, including regulators and public health. Think ripples on a pond.

We can also see it on a process level. We have iteratively streamlined how we call for and review research proposals, benefiting the scientists and their science, and the legions of CPS volunteers who counsel them.

It’s in how, responding to the continuing pandemic, our highly in-person Research Symposium became successful virtual events, greatly increasing participation and engagement in 2020 and 2021. It also led to our new Executive Conversations series. These sessions give campaign contributors a safe space to talk about their produce safety needs and concerns, and to brainstorm ideas.

Fresh produce food safety is hard. It’s one thing to understand the challenge; it’s another thing entirely to find solutions. The latter demands we keep listening to our constituents, and trying new ideas to keep improving. That’s the best way to solve complex problems – and it’s the personality of our organization.

Bonnie Fernandez-Fenaroli
CPS Executive Director



“Fresh produce food safety demands we keep listening to our constituents, and trying new ideas to keep improving. That’s the best way to solve complex problems – and it’s the personality of our organization.”



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Fund Science. Find Solutions. Fuel Change.

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