

FLASH

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First Food Safety Roundup to be held Nov. 12

Stillwater, Okla. – Oct. 29, 2008

The Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, located on the Oklahoma State University campus, will hold a quarterly Food Safety Roundup to discuss food safety issues.

The first Food Safety Roundup will be held through Centra, a Web-based distance learning tool, on Nov. 12 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

FAPC faculty and staff and state and county food safety experts will broadcast from room 120 at the FAPC and provide information on their areas of expertise, including such topics as food microbiology, meat processor issues and retail/sanitation operations, said Peter Muriana, FAPC food microbiologist and Food Safety Roundup chair.

“By using Centra, participants will be able to view the seminars by way of our web cam, watch our presentations, see and interact via white board interaction, and be able to communicate with us by typing text-messages if there is no microphone capability,” Muriana said. “For those that still wish to have face-to-face contact, we will still host participants at our site to join us in person.”

The Centra application requires a free short registration process, which will allow Web access from any Internet-accessible computer.

“We decided to use Centra for our seminars to try to reach more people who may not have the opportunity to leave their work place or drive several hours to travel to the Food Safety Roundup site,” Muriana said.

The concept of providing seminars to discuss food safety issues is not new to the FAPC. A Food Safety Roundtable was developed in 1998 to provide a forum for processors who had questions regarding Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, or HACCP, when it was first implemented and during its growth and adjustment period.

“In recent years, we noticed a declining attendance to the Food Safety Roundtable, presumably due to better familiarity of Oklahoma processors with HACCP regulations and requirements, hopefully from assistance by the FAPC personnel,” Muriana said. “In an effort to retain some of the same feel of gathering to engage in discussions on food safety issues and increase attendance, we have decided to modify the venue.”

In addition to Muriana, Jake Nelson, FAPC meat processing specialist, will give a presentation during the Nov. 12 seminar. Future Food Safety Roundups will include presentations from Stan Stromberg, food safety director for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry; Tressa Madden, director of Consumer Protection Division for the Oklahoma State Department of Health; and Barbara Brown, food specialist for the OSU department of nutritional sciences.

Other committee members include Chuck Willoughby, FAPC manager of client relations; Andrea Graves, FAPC business planning and marketing specialist; and Mandy Gross, manager of communications services.

For more information about the Food Safety Roundup or for instructions to use Centra, visit www.fapc.biz/roundup.html.

To attend the seminar by using Centra, visit <http://webconference.tamus.edu/main/oces>. If you plan to travel to the FAPC to attend the seminar in room 120 of the FAPC, please contact Karen Smith, FAPC workshop coordinator, by calling 405-744-6277 or e-mailing karenl.smith@okstate.edu.