

National Food Safety Education Month Wrap-Up



The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) celebrated National Food Safety Education Month this past September with a 5-part webinar series on emerging food safety trends. The webinar series focused on providing insights, recommendations, and tools to

assist attendees in keeping current with the rapidly changing landscape of retail food safety. A panel of subject matter experts from the new NEHA-FDA Retail Flexible Funding Model (RFFM) Grant Program kicked off the month by presenting on how the new NEHA-FDA RFFM Grant Program can offer support regarding education. Throughout the rest of the month, speakers presented on cannabis edibles from both industry and regulatory perspectives, food safety during third-party delivery, using emerging technology to supplement food safety programs, and enhancing virtual training with new technologies.

We are very grateful for our speakers who took time during September to share their knowledge and expertise. Recordings of each webinar are available on the Emerging Trends in Food Safety Webinar Series webpage at www.neha.org/eh-topic/neha-emerging-trends-food-safety-webinar-series.

Throughout the month we also celebrated food safety professionals whose work has had an outsized impact on those around them to express our gratitude for their essential work that protects the public from foodborne illness year-round. Please visit the Food Safety Heroes Blog at www.neha.org/food-safety-heroes.

The NEHA National Food Safety Education Month webpage serves as a repository for our past observances and resources, and can be found at www.neha.org/neha-celebrates-nfsem.

National Environmental Assessment Reporting System Request for Proposals



NEHA, in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will offer subawards between \$2,500 and \$4,000, depending on the number of applicants, to support state, tribal, local, or territorial governmental food safety programs to learn more about the National Environmental Assessment Reporting System (NEARS) program (www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/nears/index.htm).

NEARS is a surveillance system that captures environmental assessment data from foodborne illness outbreak investigations in retail food services to improve food safety programs.

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Who Is Eligible?

State, tribal, local, or territorial governmental food safety agencies not yet participating in NEARS. States not participating in NEARS will be given priority. Visit www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/nears/participants.htm to see the list of states and jurisdictions currently participating in NEARS.

What Types of Activities Can the Funding Support?

Funding will support food safety program initiatives to explore involvement in NEARS. Supported activities include:

- Staff time to learn about NEARS, such as
 - » Completing the Environmental Assessment Training Series (EATS) to conduct environmental assessments.
 - » Participating in a NEARS webinar training session.
- Attending a regional or national NEARS presentation.
- Purchase of environmental sampling or other investigation equipment to build capacity in foodborne outbreak investigations.
- Ability to use funds to encourage local programs within the state to participate.

Outputs Expected

- Complete the online Environmental Assessment Training Series (EATS).
- Complete the Introduction to NEARS webinar series hosted by CDC.
- Provide a 1-page final report
 - » Identify how the funding was able to help your program build capacity in conducting foodborne outbreak investigations (e.g., secured additional equipment, increased environmental assessment knowledge, provided training to staff, etc.).
 - » Identify if NEARS is a good fit for your program, if you would like to register your food safety program to participate in NEARS, and potential challenges to implementation.

How to Submit

The project period of performance is from February 1, 2022, through June 30, 2022. Applicants must submit their online application by **January 7, 2022**, by 5 p.m. EST. Awardees will be notified via email by January 28, 2022. To complete an application, visit <https://bit.ly/3EltgsO>. 🐾

Did You Know?

Members are extremely important to NEHA and its mission. NEHA's membership structure includes five different membership categories—Professional, Emerging Professional, Retired Professional, International, and Life. You can benefit from NEHA membership at any career stage. Learn more at www.neha.org/join.