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\$14 Million Investment from USDA NIFA in Food Safety Research and Outreach

Dr. Sean Campbell

Late in November, the USDA NIFA announced they would be contributing \$14 million in projects related to “food safety research, outreach and workforce training” as part of a larger effort to “strengthen the safety of our nation’s food supply.”

Within that funding, \$4.5 million will be contributed under the Food Safety & Defense Program with the mandate of reducing food contamination risks by developing methods and procedures to identify, enumerate and/or mitigate hazards in foods. Of the 12 projects funded under the Food Safety & Defense Program, Emory University in Georgia will receive around \$800,000 to develop improved laboratory tests for detecting if viruses in produce like lettuce and raspberries are infectious.

The additional \$9.6 million in funding will be under the NIFA Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP), which is tasked with providing food safety training and education to small to mid-size farms and processors, veterans, beginning and underserved farmers, and small-scale merchant wholesalers. Within the 23 funded FSOP projects, the one I’m most excited about is the University of Florida-led initiative to develop a multistate collaborative effort to support the Food Safety Modernization Act in the Southeast produce industry with compliance training, education and outreach.

[Click to read the full press release](#), which includes links to the projects mentioned.