

Partnership for Food Safety Education Hosts 2014 Educators Conference

Consumer food safety educators convene in Arlington, Va. to strengthen foodborne illness prevention

ARLINGTON, Virginia (September 16, 2014) -- The Partnership for Food Safety Education (PFSE) today announced it will host the Consumer Food Safety Education Conference in Arlington, Virginia, December 4-5. Through the conference, PFSE will bring public and private sector leaders together to discuss collaborative approaches for promoting food safety at home as fundamental to illness prevention in the United States.

The program for *Together: A Food Safe America* focuses on the latest research on how consumers handle and prepare food at home and on motivating change in consumer behaviors. The conference will feature sessions by food safety and health leaders including:

- Dr. Tom Frieden, MD, MPH, Director of the U.S. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
- Michael Taylor, Deputy Commissioner for Foods and Veterinary Medicine at the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration**
- Brian Ronholm, Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety at the **U.S. Department of Agriculture**
- Professor Lynn Frewer, Chair of Food and Society at **Newcastle University**

“The health and food safety educators who attend this conference are our direct partners in the work to prevent illness and death caused by foodborne infections,” said Shelley Feist, Executive Director of the Partnership for Food Safety Education. “Food safety behavior is learned in the home and in schools, and at this conference we will together explore how to best reach, educate and prepare every consumer to protect their health and that of their family members.”

This year’s conference will bring together nearly 500 health and food safety educators who are charged with connecting with people in their communities on the topic of food safety. As at past conferences, this year’s conference will feature leading food safety and behavioral health experts and will be attended by representatives of non-profit organizations; local, state, and federal government officials; school teachers, and food/beverage industry leaders.

The Partnership for Food Safety Education has mobilized sponsorship support for the conference, and is proud to count leading organizations and corporations as sponsors: The American Meat Institute Foundation; Ecolab; Food Marketing Institute Foundation; Grocery Manufacturers Association; IIT Institute for Food Safety and Health; NSF International; Produce Marketing Association; and Walmart.

“We are thrilled this conference, as with past conferences, reflects the network of public and private resources that help support consumers in their efforts to reduce risk of foodborne illness at home,” said the Partnership’s voluntary board chairman, Stan Hazan, Senior Director of Regulatory Affairs, NSF International.

Consumer food safety education has traditionally been an area of strong collaboration between government, industry and commodity organizations, consumer groups, and science and technical professional organizations. The first national campaign for consumer food safety education, Fight BAC!®, and its four core messages of clean, separate, cook and chill, remain the cornerstone of consumer education efforts today. For 17 years, the Partnership for Food Safety Education has been bringing people together to work on consumer education programming and problem-solving.

“Food safety is a core public health issue and a major priority of both government and industry,” said Michael Taylor, Deputy Commissioner for Foods and Veterinary Medicine, FDA. “We applaud and support the Partnership for Food Safety Education’s innovative and collaborative efforts to improve food safety education because consumer safe handling is a critical aspect of our public health strategy to prevent foodborne illness.”

Food poisoning affects one in six Americans each year.

“Conferences like these are needed to bring industry and thought leaders together, share research, and determine the most effective ways to educate consumers about food safety,” said Frank Yiannas, Vice President of Food Safety, Wal-Mart, and a conference speaker. “The Partnership for Food Safety Education is a trusted resource to food safety stakeholders. Their leadership in hosting this conference speaks to their commitment to consumers, educators and public health.”

For more information or to register for the Consumer Food Safety Education Conference 2014, visit <http://www.teamfoodsafety.org/2014>. A limited number of scholarships are available for full-time undergraduate and graduate students.

About the Partnership for Food Safety Education

The Partnership for Food Safety Education develops and promotes effective education programs to reduce foodborne illness risk for consumers. Founded in 1997, the non-profit Partnership works with an active network of 14,000 health and food safety educators, providing them with the tools they can use to educate all Americans on the importance of safe food handling to good health. For more information, visit www.fightbac.org.

The Partnership is supported by the Food Marketing Institute, the Grocery Manufacturers Association, NSF International, the Produce Marketing Association, and Cargill among other leading industry associations, professional societies in food science, nutrition and health, and consumer groups

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