

The Food Safety Policy Center (FSPC) at Michigan State University

Public concern about food and water safety, both in the United States and abroad, has escalated in recent years, while at the same time, dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of food and water safety policies and a lack of knowledge about those policies persist because no concerted, focused, and sustained study of food and water safety policy has existed.

Despite the persistent and growing uncertainty regarding food safety policy, there existed no specific university-based center solely dedicated to food safety policy in the United States. In recent years, Michigan State University (MSU) has emerged as a leader among U.S. universities in the area of food and water safety. This reputation is based predominantly on the university's accomplishments in research on biological mechanisms of foodborne illness (both toxicological and microbial) and in the arenas of national and international teaching, outreach and development.

Michigan State University is uniquely positioned to take this collective strength to the next level through the establishment of the Food Safety Policy Center (FSPC). The FSPC enjoys strong links to the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Social Science at MSU, and to other MSU centers such as Emerging Infectious Diseases, Environmental Sciences and Policy, Institute of International Agriculture, Partnership for Food Industry Development, Institute of Food Laws and Regulations, Market Supply Chain Management, National Food Safety & Toxicology Center, Hospitality Business School, School of Packaging, and Institute for Public Policy and Social Research.



**food safety
policy center**

Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI
48824-1302

517/432-3100
FAX: 517/432-2310

www.fspc.msu.edu

The FSPC is becoming an international leader in food and water safety policy by evaluating existing policies to determine whether they are risk-based and ethically acceptable, and to assess their effectiveness. Where deficiencies are determined, the FSPC will identify potential revisions or new policies to reduce food- and water-borne illness by linking basic and applied research in food, water, and disease agents with social and ethical studies to better identify problems and their respective causes, and to reduce disease.

To accomplish this, the FSPC has created interdisciplinary policy development teams with strong research, risk analysis, education, and outreach components to develop improved science- and value-based policies. The policy development teams include both the biogeochemical sciences (microbiology, toxicology, and epidemiology) and the social and behavioral sciences (sociology, political science, communications, anthropology, economics). The policy teams work with key decision-makers in government, industry, and civil society to identify significant food and water safety issues for policy exploration. These teams dialogue with all appropriate stakeholders to identify and assess credible strategies for reduction of

food- and water-borne diseases in the U.S. and abroad. The FSPC stakeholders – groups and individuals who invest in the FSPC’s programs and benefit from our activities and outcomes – include:

- Consumer and Community Organizations
- Farm Groups (Producers, Commodity Associations, etc.)
- Food Industry (Agribusiness, Food Processors, Distributors, Retailers, etc.)
- Government Agencies (USDA, FDA, CDCP, Homeland Security, USAID, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Michigan Department of Community Health, etc.)
- International Food, Health, and Trade Organizations (WTO, WHO, FAO, Codex, World Bank, etc.)
- Partner Universities/NGO’s Engaged in Food Safety Research, Training, and Outreach
- Food Safety Organizations and Agencies in Other Countries

The FSPC realizes its potential for high research impact that will be felt both in the broader scientific community and by stakeholders, as their priority issues are addressed. Research impact will come as the FSPC fills the void that has been apparent for some time among state, national, and international communities. The FSPC, too, plays a strategic role for faculty and partners in coalescing researchers engaged in food safety and policy issues at the state, national, and international levels, linking the work of bench scientists and social scientists in a partnership that will guide the future of food and water safety research and outreach.

By providing integrative focal points for current and emerging efforts in food, water, and health, and generating credibility and recognition, the FSPC continues to promote Michigan State University’s goal of advancing knowledge and transforming lives.