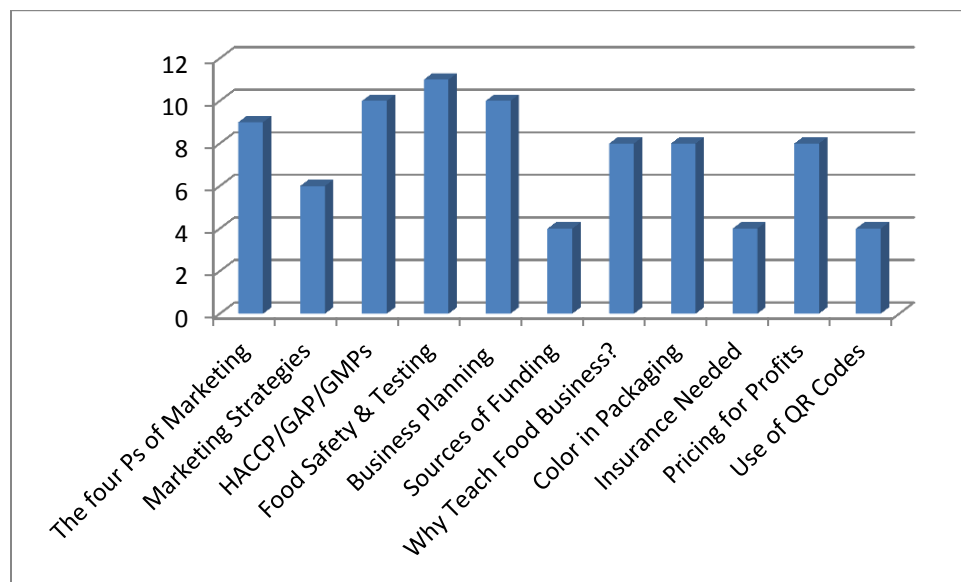


Post-Training Survey Results NE SARE Professional Education Project 2012 through 2016

In 2012, Penn State Extension received a Professional Education Grant from NE SARE for the project, ENE12-125, *Enhancing Cooperative Extension capacity to support the advancement of adding value and direct marketing by farmers in the Northeast*. Training was provided via webinars to 50 Extension and agricultural professionals. Although many of those who were trained participated in live Internet sessions, 25 of the participants received some of their training through watching a recording of at least one of the webinars. A post-session survey (via Survey Monkey) assessed the effectiveness of this asynchronous learning.

The trainees viewed the recordings in 2014 and 2015 – and submitted information about what had been learned and how they would use this information via the survey tool.

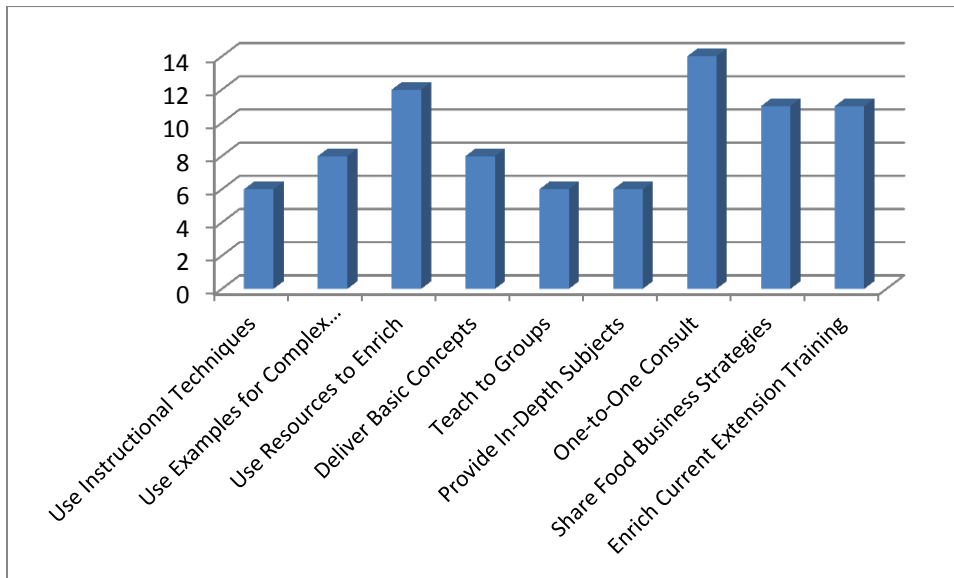
Respondents were asked, “Please describe one new concept or idea learned by viewing this webinar” in an open ended question. The resulting responses (related to viewing of 68 webinar recordings) were categorized for purpose of this report, clustering them in information categories. Using this summary manner, the number of people citing a specific area of learning were as illustrated:



The largest number of people with similar responses cited learning about food safety and lab tests; Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) – all programs to enhance food safety and risk management; Business Planning; and the “4Ps” of Marketing. Interesting responses included several people referencing the marketing strategy of “explaining your product to a Martian” and the psychological impacts of color in packaging.

One specific respondent said, “Since i own a restaurant and have been to better process control school - none of the concepts were new (thank the gods-lol!). But one simple thing Mr. Grunden said that i'll use - 1000 times is ‘you can't make unsafe food safe.’ May not seem like much - but it is shorthand every time my staff or a farmer asks me: ‘why do we have to go thru ALL this stuff?!’” This response indicates that even seasoned food entrepreneurs learned “something new” from the webinars.

A second question asked of those individuals surveyed was, “Please describe one way you will use the information presented in the webinar as you work with future clients.” Again, the responses are grouped by category for simplicity of review and comparison.



The largest number of the respondents intended to provide the information to individual clients, rather than through group sessions. Most often, the responses referenced a specific business strategy for food safety or risk management that would be shared with clients in workshops and one-to-one.

Responses that detailed how certain respondents intended to use what was learned included:

“I've already had many people ask about food prep and preservation in order to sell at the Farmer's Market, so I will be able to give them a more accurate answer as to the requirements and food safety guidelines to follow in preparing to market their products.” and

“After watching this webinar, I will be able to give clients a concise overview of key areas of their food for profit business that should be addressed on their journey to building a successful business. Social media, marketing, food safety, etc. are all key concepts that not everyone thinks of when they say they want to start a food for profit business, but should. I can now let people know that knowing how to address these issues (will) position them to be more successful.”

Some examples of how what was learned would allow enrichment of current Extension Trainings (beyond *Food for Profit* and *Managing Risk for Food Businesses*) were also voiced:

“As an Annie's Project coordinator I'll definitely use this session to delve even deeper into Business Plan development than I have in the past.” and

“In working with our garden to market students I have already consulted many of the Oregon Department of Agriculture documentation -- we have created 2 value added products to date for market. I always stress cleanliness, but this adds a new level to that discussion that I can now go back and have with them.” as well as

“I plan to use the *turkey example* while teaching HACCP in my ServSafe Managers Certification course.”

These responses illustrate how the information provided by the professional development webinars was not focused just on equipping the participants to teach a *Food for Profit* workshop, but rather empowering them to use food safety and food entrepreneurship concepts in their everyday work with farmers and would-be entrepreneurs.

In all, the survey responses demonstrated that use of webinar recordings (as opposed to face-to-face training sessions or “live” webinars) was an effective alternative. This alternative allowed more Extension and agricultural professionals to fit the professional development into their busy schedules, preparing them to help farmers who wanted to add value or direct market food.