

Mentor Expectations and Responsibilities

The purpose of the Produce Safety Immersion Program is to help further develop newer produce safety professionals. We seek three to four industry leaders who are willing to serve as mentors for the fifteen-to-eighteen-person cohort. This document lays out the expectations of mentors. Questions can be directed to Alison Saltzmann at asaltzmann@freshproduce.com

1. What is the time commitment?

- a. Mentors should expect to spend roughly 3 weeks, divided over the course of six months (end of April - October), supporting the participants in this program.
- b. Mentors will accompany participants as they experience The Washington Conference 2024, staying a few extra days to tour local produce operations. This will take place during the first half of the week of June 10th.
- c. Mentors will also accompany participants as they experience the Global Produce and Floral Show 2024, present final presentations and participate in a graduation ceremony on the show floor. This will take place the last half of the week of October 14th.
- d. Mentors should plan to join the supplemental webinars and optional networking sessions with participants and industry experts. There will be an average of two virtual events per month.
- e. Additionally, mentors should plan to set aside 3 hours per month to speak with and coach participants. Mentors should strive to remain generally available to field produce safety inquiries from participants.
 - i. A best practice which has worked well for previous mentors is to set aside one hour on the “off” weeks when webinars are not held to hold “office hours.” This provides mentees with a known time to connect with their mentors and peers to discuss the recent webinars, ask questions about projects or just discuss top of mind issues outside of the regular class sessions.

2. Do I need to participate in all activities?

- a. Mentors are encouraged to participate in all activities; dates of critical events will be communicated as the program launches. Optional enrichment opportunities will also be available to participants, and we hope mentors will support them.

3. What does “participate” mean?

- a. In addition to working closely with a subset of participants, mentors will be expected to:
 - i. Serve as an instructor during a webinar and/or serve as an instructor during an experience.
 - ii. Demonstrate a “journal club” style critique of a publication, evaluation of a regulation, critique of a new technology, and comparable way in which critical thinking skills are demonstrated.
 - iii. Provide formal, constructive feedback to participants when they present their group “journal club” or research report and their final presentations.

4. What is the fee? Are mentors paid?

- a. There is no fee for mentors to participate. Mentors will receive complimentary registrations for the 2024 Washington Conference and the Global Produce and Floral Show. Additionally, the program will cover hotel and group meals during both The Washington Conference and the Global Floral and Produce Show. Mentors will be responsible for their own transportation and related travel expenses.

5. Will specific participants be assigned to me?

- a. Yes, we will pair you with 3-4 program participants however, we hope you will network with all participants.

6. How long is the term?

- a. The official term is approximately six months, beginning in May 2024. The hope is that the connections that are made through the program are long lasting.

7. Must mentors be located in the US?

- a. No, mentors do not have to reside in the United States, however the program is delivered in English, and virtual sessions are generally held between 11 am – 6 pm Eastern (New York) time.
- b. Additionally, the mentors must be able to travel to the US to participate in the live sessions during The Washington Conference and the Global Floral and Produce Show.

8. Is there a term limit?

- a. No. With each new group of cohorts, a new group of mentors will be solicited. Previous mentors are welcome to re-apply.