



Impact Statement

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Project Title: Plan for the Integrated CFS3 and JIFSAN

Issue:

Food safety programs have traditionally been associated with food science departments or veterinary schools. The breadth of this translational subject area now requires a trans-disciplinary approach to develop and implement meaningful programs for achieving the goal of ensuring that the public has access to a safe, abundant, and affordable food supply. This vast scope of issues associated with food safety strongly argue for a multidisciplinary program that draws upon the intellectual resources and facilities across the university.

To meet the food safety challenges, the University of Maryland has established two programs, Center for Food Safety and Security System (CFS3), and Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN) – FDA’s Center of Excellence. They are loosely integrated and the organizational structure has not reached the potential as it was designed for. Changes are needed to enhance the existing programs and promote the University’s stand as a national and international leader in food safety research, education and outreach.

There are already a number of centers in several universities devoted to various aspects of food safety and food defense. Thus, it is critical that JIFSAN finds a unique niche that will capture the attention and imagination of industry, government agencies, and international organizations, and builds on the strengths of the University and its location in the Washington, DC area.

What has been done:

We have proposed a plan that further integrates CFS3 and JIFSAN. The new JIFSAN will promote activities of the various components into an overall program that can enhance innovative research, education and outreach programs, leverage resources provided by the University and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other funding sources, minimize administrative overhead, and increase “brand name recognition” for our programs in food safety, risk assessment, laboratory science, food defense, and applied nutrition. To this point the choice of the JIFSAN as the name of the integrated program recognizes its significant international reputation built through its 21-year history.

Impacts/New Partnerships:

The plan has not been approved. But the program has already embraced a unique approach to establish partnerships within and outside the university, which combine 1) tenure-track faculty members with joint appointments with an academic department, 2) research faculty with specialized skills, particularly in relation to international outreach programs, and 3) collaborative partnerships with other academic institutions, industry, and FDA and USDA. In addition to

putting together a strong campus-wide program that strengthens multiple departments while integrating its ability to take on one of the “big food issues” facing the country, it would also provide a strong base for working with the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus.

Outcome of Project (societal impact/ measure of increased quality of life)

To be determined.

How has your project been aided by your FSLI experience?

The FSLI experience has helped tremendously in developing the plan and motivating me to do my job. I have had great opportunities to practice many skills learned from the program, including communications, organization, and negotiation/persuasion. These skills have enabled me to think, plan and execute differently in many ways, and provided me tools and confidence in managing day-to-day operations.

Contact information: