

Online Training Ensures Seafood Safety

Ah, summer. Time to put shrimp on the barbeque or maybe hold a clam bake or a fish fry. We rely on and expect that New York has a safe and sustainable seafood supply. To remain competitive and prosper, the State's multi-billion dollar seafood industry that employs thousands of New Yorkers must use science-based systems to maximize the safety and quality of its products. **Ken Gall**, New York Sea Grant's seafood safety specialist, collaborates with businesses, regulatory agencies, the national Sea Grant network and universities to conduct on-site and distance education training programs and workshops to assist the seafood industry in its pursuit of freshness and quality.

Gall reports that in 2009, more than 1,000 individuals from seafood companies and state or federal regulatory agencies participated in food safety training programs conducted or managed by New York Sea Grant. In that same timeframe, nearly 750 individuals enrolled in the Internet-based course that enables them to meet the training requirement of the Food and Drug Administration's seafood HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) regulation. Another online course, Good Manufacturing Practices, trained 150 individuals on basic food safety practices for food processors, wholesalers and warehouses. Since these two courses were created, more than 4,500 people have received instruction.



NYSG is also developing training resources and expertise for the future; it is one of four Sea Grant programs that received a \$600,000 grant from USDA's National Integrated Food Safety Initiative in 2009 to update the national Seafood HACCP Alliance training program. The program, developed in 1995, incorporates new scientific findings and regulatory requirements for a national network of qualified trainers. In 2009, NYSG was among key members of a national team that developed a new training manual and teaching modules. NYSG also helped conduct a train-the-trainer course for 25 food safety inspectors from 14 different states that will qualify them to conduct Seafood HACCP training in their state or region.

—Ken Gall and Barbara A. Branca

