

TRAINING PRESENTERS FOOD SAFETY BIOS

Christopher Alonzo

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Corporate Sanitation Manager, Leprino Foods, Inc.

Christopher Alonzo serves as Corporate Sanitation Manager for Leprino Foods, Inc., where he drives continuous sanitation improvement efforts. Christopher has over 31 years of experience in the food industry, including more than 11 years of direct experience in food safety and cleaning & sanitation in roles as a supervisor and manager, on the plant and corporate levels. He also has 14 years of experience in operations and production as a production supervisor in the dairy industry.

Christopher has assisted Leprino Foods in improving their cleaning & sanitation programs from both the production and quality perspective by conducting on-the-floor coaching, classroom training, and building teamwork across multiple functions. He has developed and implemented programs such as HACCP, MSS, SSOPs, environmental sanitation, routine teardown inspections, and CIP verification & validation. He also leads CIP optimization projects as a subject matter expert. Additionally, Christopher has assisted with Pest Control, FSMA/FSCPA, & Food Safety Plan projects and initiatives, and he is also PCQI certified.

Srinivasarao (Sri) Bandla

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Quality Assurance Manager, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Sri Bandla is an internationally recognized food safety professional with over 14 years of diversified experience in quality assurance and food safety management within the dairy manufacturing industry. Currently serving as the Quality Assurance Manager at Land O'Lakes, Inc., he plays a pivotal role in ensuring the highest standards of quality, food safety, and regulatory compliance for dairy powders and fluids. His vast expertise encompasses QA and food safety, pathogen environmental monitoring, regulatory compliance (21 CFR 111, 113, & 117), and quality auditing. Sri has worked with globally renowned dairy manufacturing companies, where he partnered with cross-functional teams, including research and development, to deliver safe, high-quality dairy products to consumers. His ability to manage complex, large-scale operations, coupled with his commitment to fostering a culture of food safety, QA, and accountability, makes him a key asset to any organization.

Joe Barrow

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Director of Quality and Food Safety, Idaho Milk Products, Inc.

Joe Barrow is the Director of Quality and Food Safety for Idaho Milk Products, which is one of the largest Milk Protein Concentrate and Milk Protein Isolate plants in the world. For the last 3 years he has been responsible for the quality systems and food safety programs at Idaho Milk Products.

Joe grew up on a family farm in southern Idaho then went on to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology from Idaho State University, so he has been involved in food production in some form for his entire life. Prior to Idaho Milk, Joe worked for Glanbia Nutritional's where he was the Quality Manager at the largest barrel cheese plant in the world and was responsible for quality in both cheese and whey operations. Joe has also held quality roles with Sorrento Lactalis, Pinnacle Foods, and the JR Simplot company. In total Joe has 21 years of experience in Quality Assurance and Food Safety.

Dan Belina

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QA Director – Product Safety & Regulatory Affairs, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Dan Belina is the QA Director – Product Safety & Regulatory Affairs within the Corporate Quality Assurance group at Land O'Lakes, Inc., a leading manufacturer of dairy products, animal feed and crop protection products. In his current position, Dan's team provides leadership in the areas of product safety, regulatory affairs, labeling and laboratory testing. His team is responsible for these areas within the dairy foods, animal feed and crop inputs divisions. Dan is an active participant in professional and trade organizations such as the International Association for Food Protection and the Consumer Brands Association.

Dan received his M.S. in Food Science from the University of Minnesota. Prior to joining Land O'Lakes Dan held food safety / quality assurance positions at Village Inn Company, Amgen, and General Mills.

Erika Bognar

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Sr. Director - Food Safety, Sargento Foods, Inc.

Erika is currently the Sr. Director of Food Safety at Sargento. She is responsible for providing food safety and commercialization quality support to four manufacturing facilities and one pilot plant. She supports those teams by providing guidance on environmental monitoring, sanitation swabbing, microbiological testing, and regulatory compliance. Erika also provides leadership to a Corporate Microbiology Laboratory at Sargento's Elkhart Lake Technical Center. She directs the Corporate Food Safety Steering Team and Plant Food Safety Teams to help educate and promote awareness to enhance food safety culture across the organization. Prior to joining Sargento, Erika started her career in QA/Microbiology at Sartori Cheese.

Erika received her B.S. in Biology from Marian University in Fond du Lac, WI and her M.S. in Food Safety from Michigan State University. She is a teacher for Better Process Cheese School at the Food Research Institute (FRI) and supports Dairy Plant Food Safety Workshops with the Innovation Center for US Dairy. Erika is also active on Food Safety Committees with

the Innovation Center and IDFA and serves on the Education Committee for the Wisconsin Association for Food Protection.

Erika received her B.S. in Biology from Marian University in Fond du Lac, WI and is currently completing her final courses and research project for a M.S. in Food Safety at Michigan State University.

Montgomery “Monty” Bohanan

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Senior Corporate Manager, Sanitation, Leprino Foods Company

Monty Bohanan serves as Associate Director, Sanitation for Leprino Foods, Inc., where he drives continuous sanitation improvement efforts.

Monty has 39+ years of experience in the food industry including 22+ years of direct food safety and cleaning & sanitation experience in roles as a supervisor, manager, consultant and technical resource. Most of his experience has been in the dairy industry, though he also has experience in fruit & juice processing, ready-to eat, bakery, meat processing, and beverage plants. Monty has assisted companies with improving their cleaning & sanitation programs by conducting on-the-floor coaching, classroom training, and developing programs such as HACCP, FSCPA, MSS, SSOPs, PEMs, environmental sanitation, routine teardown inspections, and CIP verification, validation, and optimization.

Monty has a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Missouri - Rolla (now Missouri Institute for Science and Technology). In his career, he has also held Production Management, Process Engineering, R&D Management, Quality Assurance Management, and Applications Engineering positions.

Eileen Bonville

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FSQ Technician, SQF and FSQ Lab Lead, & FSQ Supervisor, HP Hood

Eileen Bonville works on the Corporate Process Improvement team at HP Hood LLC and has been with the company for 11 years. She has held a few other positions at HP Hood prior to her current role: FSQ technician, SQF and FSQ Lab lead, and FSQ Supervisor. In her current role, she supports 8 of the 12 manufacturing facilities for HP Hood with Process Improvement initiatives. This role requires her to work closely with the operations and the food safety and quality departments to maintain regulatory and quality standards, while improving efficiencies and reducing waste. She holds certificates for SQF practitioner, HACCP, and PCQI. She has also attended programs at Cornell and Penn State for various certificates in Ice Cream, Cottage Cheese and Yogurt processing, food safety and quality. Eileen graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Cell and Molecular Biology from SUNY Binghamton in 2012.

John Boortz

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Sr. Director of Quality, Tillamook County Creamery Association

John Boortz is the Sr. Director of Quality for Tillamook County Creamery Association. He has led the Food Safety and Quality teams at Tillamook since 2013. His over 30 years of experience in the food industry includes leadership roles in Quality, Operations, Financial Analysis, and Laboratory Management.

John received his bachelor's degree in business administration from Marian University in Fond du Lac Wisconsin, with majors in Marketing and General Management.

Tillamook's dairy products compete in five retail categories: Cheese, Ice Cream, Yogurt, Butter, and Sour Cream. Tillamook also manufactures dried whey, WPC-80, and Lactose. Tillamook manufacturing locations maintain SQF level 2 certification, and the laboratory is ISO-17025 accredited for pathogen testing.

Michelle Braun

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Food Safety and Validation Manager, Agropur, Inc.

Michelle Braun is part of the global quality assurance team for Agropur. She provides food safety, root cause analysis, and validation support to Agropur sites in the US and Canada.

Prior to joining Agropur, Michelle graduated with a B.S. in Food Science from the University of Arkansas and an MBA from the University of Nebraska- Lincoln. She has previously held positions with Land O'Lakes and Dean Foods.

Roger Brown

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Sanitation Team Leader, Schreiber Foods Inc.

Roger Brown received his Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Illinois in 1982. From there he worked for Kraft Foods-Champaign, IL for five years in Quality Assurance and Sanitation. From 1987 to 2006, Roger worked for Birds Eye Foods- (Curtice Burns, Inc.) dealing in aseptic, frozen and canned fruits/vegetables including meals. His role was Director of Laboratory Services providing microbiology support and sanitation support to all Birds Eye facilities and a good deal of work dealing with *Listeria* in frozen vegetable processing facilities and cleaning them to manage "*Listeria* Free" in these facilities.

Roger has been working in the Dairy industry-two years with Saputo in a Quality Assurance role and most recently with Schreiber Foods in Green Bay, WI as the Sanitation Team Leader providing Sanitation support to all Schreiber facilities. Roger has 30 plus years in providing technical support including microbiology, sanitation, and quality assurance to the food industry with significant emphasis on *Listeria* control.

Matt Charles

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Director of Food Safety & Quality, Blue Bell Creameries

Matt Charles is the Director of Food Safety & Quality at Blue Bell Creameries. He holds a Bachelor of Science from Texas A&M University and has 15 years' experience in Food Processing including Quality Control, Quality Assurance, Food Science, Research and Development, and Production.

John Coelho

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Sanitation Program Manager, Hilmar

John Coelho, Jr. serves as Corporate Sanitation Program Manager at Hilmar, responsible for enterprise sanitation and cleaning, pathogen control, microbiological performance, and sanitation systems effectiveness. John has more than 25 years of food production experience with 15 years in Quality and Food Safety Management.

John was raised working on his family's 900 cow Jersey dairy farm near Portland, Oregon. Working with his family John learned the basics of animal nutrition, milk production and business management. John spent his last five years with the dairy as General Manager of the family's farm-based specialty cheese plant Queseria Cheese. Queseria produced and distributed Mexican style cheeses to over 75 stores in the Pacific Northwest and Northern California.

In 2007, the family sold the cheese business and John joined the supervisory team at Safeway's milk plant in Clackamas, Oregon. In 2011, John joined Hilmar Cheese and Ingredient in California as Corporate Food Safety Manager. In 2014, John transitioned to Corporate Quality Assurance Manager in charge of all aspects of Quality Assurance and Food Safety at Hilmar's manufacturing sites. John has participated as a Subject Matter Expert for the Dairy Plant Food Safety workshop series since 2011. John has spoken at over 75 events and is a recognized industry expert in dairy plant Food Safety, Sanitation and Regulatory Compliance. commitment to fostering a culture of food safety, QA, and accountability, makes him a key asset to any organization.

Blake L. Criswell, CFS

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Dairy Industry Expert

Blake Criswell has 30 years of dairy industry experience focused on food science, plant management, plant design, commissioning, food safety, and regulatory compliance. His experiences include all aspects of milk and whey processing technologies including ion exchange, separation, pasteurization, membrane filtration, evaporation, spray drying, powder handling and lactose processing.

Prior to founding his consultancy in 2025, he held numerous positions in the dairy industry dating back to 1995 including over 15 years with Leprino Foods Company. He has also spent time working for Select Services, Tetra Pak, Filtration Engineering and Mid-America Dairymen (DFA). Blake graduated from Louisiana Tech University with B.S. in Animal Science.

Melinda Davis

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Food Safety and Quality Manager, HP Hood

Melinda Davis is the FS & Q Manager at HP Hood in Barre VT. Her responsibilities include maintaining the site's food safety and quality programs, regulatory compliance, internal audits and third party. As well as managing the lab and certified lab program.

Melinda has a B.S. in Food Science, Nutrition and Dietetics from the University of Vermont. Prior to Hood and the dairy industry Melinda worked in the brewing industry for Magic Hat Brewing Company as Lead Quality Assurance Analyst.

Melinda is a Task Force Director for the Dairy Practices Council on Regulatory Issues and HACCP. She is on the board of the Vermont Dairy Industry Association and involved with NCIMS.

Julia Di Piero

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Director of Quality Execution, Leprino Foods

Julia Di Piero has been working in the dairy industry for over 15 years. She has worked in various areas from production to quality and food safety and has worked with various “dry” and “wet” dairy products. She has been the quality and food safety lead in facility build/re-builds as well as new process installations.

Julia currently is the Director of Quality Execution for Leprino Foods at the Lemoore West Facility. Being responsible for food safety and the quality vision and strategy for the site, she supports the QE team through guidance in sanitation, sanitary design, environmental swabbing, and general laboratory testing. She supports the production team in driving overall objective pertaining to quality, food safety, regulatory compliance, and food safety culture.

Prior to working for Leprino Foods, Julia worked for Hilmar Cheese Company and California Dairies Inc with increasing levels of responsibility for quality and food safety. Julia received her BS and MS in Food and Nutrition as well as her MBA from CSU, Fresno.

Denise DuFresne

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Director of Food Safety, Saputo Dairy Foods USA.

Denise DuFresne started in the dairy industry upon graduation after receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1994. She immediately went to work for Meadow Gold Dairies in Englewood, in the Laboratory. Over the past 30+ years in the industry she has worked for Borden's, Leprino Foods, Safeway and Saputo Inc. Denise has served in a variety of roles from Chemist, Microbiologist, Product Compliance, Quality, Sanitation, Food Safety, regulatory compliance and Auditing of suppliers and copackers.

Currently, Denise is employed by Saputo inc. and is the Director of Food Safety where she oversees the implementation of food safety systems, and all programs associated. She additionally addresses regulatory and food safety risk mitigation and advises on startups and acquisitions.

Chad Galer

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Vice President, Product Research & Food Safety, Dairy Management Inc.

Chad has been involved in the dairy industry his entire life, he was born and raised on a dairy farm in Southwest Wisconsin. He spent 14 years at Kraft Foods working in several roles, including Quality, Product Development, Product Research, and Process Engineering. He has also been involved with the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest as the Head cheddar judge for the regional contest and the contest coordinator for the national contest.

In his current role as Vice President of Product Research and Food Safety, Chad is responsible for coordinating food safety training activities of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy including this training class, leading research funding for food safety, and industry outreach. Chad also supports National Dairy Council research programs at major Universities to drive dairy innovation and sales for U.S. dairy products and ingredients on behalf of U.S. dairy farmers.

Chad holds a BS in Microbiology from the University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse.

Jordan Goodwin

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Jordan holds a Bachelor's degree from CSU, Chico and brings over 15 years of experience at Leprino Foods. With 12 years in Cheese Production, he progressed through roles from Operator to Foreperson, Supervisor, and ultimately Senior Supervisor. For the past 3 years, he has served as a Senior Supervisor in Quality Execution, leading teams in Sanitation, Cheese Hold and Release, as well as Analytical and Performance Labs. Throughout his career, Jordan has demonstrated increasing levels of technical leadership across production, sanitation, and quality functions.

Jessie Heidenreich

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Research Microbiologist, Hilmar Cheese Company

Jessie Heidenreich is currently employed by Hilmar Cheese Company for 3 years in Cheese Research and Development, managing a research microbiology laboratory and working with other departments to help solve the mysterious microbiology problems using both traditional and modern technologies for quantification and identification. She also focuses on understanding cheese cultures' physiology to develop starter cheese blends and phage inhibition.

Previously, Jessie received her Ph.D. from University of WI-Madison, her home state, in Food Science, concentrating on Microbiology and Molecular Biology. Prior to this, she worked at Kansas State University, managing a Food Harvest and Pre-Safety Lab, focusing on microbial fermentation and pathogens on the feedlot. She received her master's in food science-Food Safety from University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and gained experience working for quality assurance for a fluid dairy and non-dairy plant.

Rich Holtquist

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*Independent Food Manufacturing Consultant/Contractor, RLHoltquist Solutions LLC
Adjunct Professor Supply Chain, Sam Walton School of Business, University of Arkansas*

Rich has been working in food manufacturing for 40+ years. He retired from Kraft Foods following a notable 33-year career in which he held various plant and corporate leadership roles in Quality, Food Safety, Operations, and Lean Manufacturing.

Following his retirement from Kraft, Rich has been a successful consultant/contractor assisting 20+ food company clients by temporarily covering open key leadership positions, building quality and food safety programs, trouble-shooting food safety issues, and leading new line start-ups. Rich has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and Biological Science from South Dakota State University, with a major in Dairy Science and minor in Chemistry. He also has a certification in Statistical Process Control from Penn State University and an MBA from Lake Forest School of Management.

Commitment to fostering a culture of food safety, QA, and accountability, makes him a key asset to any organization.

Justin Jafferis

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Manager of Food Safety and Regulatory Affairs, Grande Cheese Company

Justin Jafferis is the Manager of Food Safety and Regulatory Affairs for Grande Cheese Company. Justin joined Grande in 2012 leading manufacturing sites in food safety and quality, overseeing both cheese and whey operations. Since taking the food safety role, Justin has had responsibility in oversight of sanitation/sanitary design, supplier auditing, training, regulatory affairs and food safety programs such as environmental monitoring.

Prior to joining Grande Cheese Company, Justin received his B.S. in Biology from Carroll University. Also, Justin worked for the FDA as Consumer Safety Officer and Jack Link's Beef Jerky.

Sudeep Jain

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Director - Quality Assurance, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Sudeep Jain is Director of Quality Assurance at Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA), Novi, MI. This milk co-operative serves farmers in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin. MMPA makes condensed and dried milk products, butter, UF milk, and cheese. He leads Regulatory, Food Safety and Quality Assurance efforts at 3 production facilities of MMPA. Prior to coming to MMPA, he held various Manufacturing and Quality Assurance positions at dairy and ready-to-eat product companies in India and the US. He has a background in dairy/food processing, and food Safety.

Sudeep completed his bachelor's degree in Dairy Technology from Gujarat Agricultural University, India and a master's degree in food science from the University of Georgia, Athens, GA with a focus on Food microbiology. He is an FSPCA Lead Instructor.

Steve Keilman, M.A

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Regional Food Safety and Quality Assurance Manager, Saputo

Steve possesses 26 years of professional experience in the food and beverage sector, having held several roles in operations management, sanitation director, and quality assurance. Steve serves as the Regional Food Safety and Quality Assurance Manager for Saputo USA. He possesses considerable expertise in environmental sanitation and has authored research on the effectiveness of sanitizers in dairy applications. He champions food safety culture. He has considerable experience establishing and overseeing environmental monitoring programs, as well as allergen programs at food facilities.

David Kedzierski

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Senior Vice President, Business Transformation, United Dairymen of Arizona

Dave Kedzierski has been employed by United Dairymen of Arizona (UDA), Inc. since November 2021 initially as VP FSQA and since June 2022, as Executive Leader of FSQA, Regulatory, Technical, Continuous Improvement, Project Management, and Human Resources. He is a UDA representative on food safety and technical matters at the national level with National Milk, NCIMS, 3-A, and the Dairy Innovation Center. Dave serves as a member of the Innovation Center Food Safety Operating Committee, Chair -National Milk Regulatory Committee, NCIMS Council Vice Chair & Committee member, food safety subject matter expert for dried dairy conferences, and previous chair and board member of 3A SSI.

Dave has 33+ Years of Dairy Processing Management experience working previously for Leprino Foods, Saputo Cheese USA, and Agri-Mark, Inc. serving in multiple FSQA, Operations, and Technical roles.

He earned Bachelor's Degree, Biology from the University Wisconsin – Eau Claire as well as an MBA from Liberty University. He has extensive leadership experience including Zenger-Mueller, US Army Primary Leadership & Development Course, and other leadership classes and courses. He is a Veteran of the US Army including service patrolling the famous Berlin Wall and serving with the 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

He is a Veteran of the US Army including service patrolling the famous Berlin Wall and serving with the 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. products to consumers. His ability to manage complex, large-scale operations, coupled with his commitment to fostering a culture of food safety, QA, and accountability, makes him a key asset to any organization.

Brian Kraus

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Director Food Safety & Regulatory Compliance, Wells Enterprises Inc.

Brian obtained a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology from Iowa State University and a Master of Science in Food Safety from Michigan State University. He is currently serving as Director of Food Safety & Regulatory Compliance for Wells Enterprises, Inc.

His responsibilities included: authoring and implementing Food Safety Systems to include Food Safety Plans and supporting SOPs. Additionally, developing and implementing: Environmental Monitoring Programs including investigations to support CARs (corrective action response) to environmental presumptive and Allergen Cleaning Verification and Validation Process. Brian also directs the activities of the ISO 17025 Accredited Microbiological Laboratory (includes Biosafety Level 2 pathogen lab) that supports the operations of the Wells production facilities. As a foundation to these responsibilities, he is a certified HACCP Trainer through HACCP Alliance and a FSPCA Lead Instructor for PCQI certification.

Brian has 40+ years in the food industry all of which in a food safety capacity. Most of that time was spent in the RTE meat processing industry with Armour Swift-Eckrich, Advance Brands and Tyson Foods. The past 15 years in the ice cream manufacturing industry with Wells and a short stint in the egg industry with Michael Foods

Jamie Lofland

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Food Safety Manager, Schreiber Foods Inc.

Jamie received her Bachelor of Science in Animal Science with an emphasis of Food Industry from Oklahoma State University in 2004. Jamie started her career at Schreiber Foods and held several production and quality supervisory roles at various Schreiber facilities for 9 years, then moved to her current corporate role as Food Safety Manager. Jamie oversees the Corporate Pathogen Environmental Monitoring program (corporate policy and strategy; swabbing audits, training, and program adjustments for site-specific effectiveness; ensuring root cause analysis, mitigation efforts, escalation plans, and communication) as well as other food safety programs involving food safety training, GMPs, food safety construction plans, special cause events and line validations.

Charles Mack

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Corporate Quality Assurance, Prairie Farms Dairy Inc.

Charles Mack is currently part of the Corporate Quality Assurance team with Prairie Farms Dairy Inc. He has been with Prairie Farms for 5 years. The past 4 years he has overseen the quality of the cultured products throughout the company. Charles also supports Prairie Farms plants in quality, regulatory, and customer compliance.

He is involved in the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments, International Association for Food Protection, and International Food Technologists. Charles has a B.S. in Food Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Karen McCarty

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Food Safety Professional, retired

Karen McCarty has recently retired from the dairy industry where she held senior food safety leadership roles in Davisco Foods International and Agropur. Karen graduated with a BS in Bacteriology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and continues to serve the dairy industry by volunteering her time to the Innovation Center for US Dairy.

Jeremy Maughan

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Food Safety & Sanitation Manager, Schreiber Foods Inc.

Jeremy Maughan is a Food Safety and Sanitation Manager at Schreiber Foods Inc., where he has dedicated over 17 years of service. Throughout his tenure, Jeremy has held various roles across three different plants, including machine operator, sanitation performer, and sanitation manager. He has spent more than eight years as a sanitation manager at two different dairy plants within Schreiber.

Jeremy also gained valuable experience as a chemical account manager for a major chemical company for two years before rejoining Schreiber in 2023. In his current role, Jeremy is responsible for developing high-performing sanitation leaders through hands-on and classroom training, as well as conducting internal audits of each plant's sanitation program. Additionally, he supports new equipment startups, supports quality investigations, and reviews and updates corporate policies and procedures.

Annie Piepenhagen

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Food Safety, Quality & Regulatory Director, Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative

More than 20 years of experience in food safety and regulatory compliance within the dairy industry. Currently serves as Food Safety, Quality & Regulatory Director at Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative, focusing on enhancing food safety and quality systems and building strong relationships with regulatory authorities. Previous experience includes leading the scientific and regulatory affairs department at Dairy Farmers of America, with oversight of regulatory compliance across multiple manufacturing facilities. An active member of the NCIMS Council I and the Intertek Alchemy Content Executive Board. Graduate of Pennsylvania State University with a degree in Food Science. Dedicated to continuous improvement, team development, and strengthening food safety culture. Former 4-H Dairy kid whose cow became a National Champion and got her completely committed to the dairy industry.

Katelyn Poulin

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Food Safety and Quality Regional Director, HP Hood

Katelyn Poulin is a Food Safety and Quality Regional Director at HP Hood with operational quality oversight of 6 manufacturing facilities. Hood's product mix includes conventional dairy, extended shelf life, and LACF Aseptic production representing a wide variety of products - milk, plant-based beverages, protein drinks, cultured products and ice cream, to name a few. Her expertise includes oversight of environmental monitoring programs, RCA/CAPA work, data analysis/trending, and auditing (internal and external) at her sites.

Katelyn has a B.S. in Biology from West Virginia University, and a M.S. in Biohazardous Threat Agents and Emerging Infectious Diseases from Georgetown University. She has been with Hood for 12 years – her entire career in Dairy/Food Manufacturing!

Brian Perry

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President & General Manager Select Services, Quality Services, Select Services

Brian Perry is an esteemed food safety and quality assurance expert, boasting a rich career of almost 30 years. His leadership has been instrumental in directing and refining food safety and quality, driving innovative R&D processes, leading risk prevention, and refining operational standards for Fortune 500 companies. His management experience spans multiple business units, facility locations, and organizational initiatives, with specialized knowledge of HACCP and other food safety guidelines, crucial food technologies, and various food types.

Throughout his career with leading food companies, Brian has progressed through numerous quality and food safety roles, including Quality Assurance Manager, Manager, Operations & Quality, Senior Director, Quality Systems, Vice President, Food Safety & Quality, and Senior VP & Chief Safety Officer.

Staci Richardson

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Senior Vice President, Enterprise Quality & Food Safety, Schreiber Foods Inc.

Staci is Senior Vice President, Enterprise Quality & Food Safety for Schreiber Foods. She joined the company in 2008 as a Safe Food Manager, becoming a Food Safety & Sanitation Program Director in 2013. Staci moved to Spain as the Director of International Enterprise Quality & Food Safety in 2015, returning to the United States in 2018 as Director of Enterprise FSQ Systems & Europe/Asia. Prior to Schreiber, she worked in two different plants for the J.M. Smucker Company, holding a variety of operational roles leading quality, sanitation, formulations, production, and maintenance.

In the community, Staci is on the corporate board of directors for Boys & Girls Club of the Bay and Lakes Region. She's also active with the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy and IDFA Food Safety Committee. Staci has received several awards in her tenure with Schreiber including multiple awards for Leadership and Quality.

Staci has a bachelor's degree in microbiology and a Business Spanish Certificate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While there, she did two years of food pathogen research under Dr. Kathy Glass and Dr. Eric Johnson at the Food Research Institute. She has also completed the Executive Leadership Program through St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin.

Brad Slater

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Senior Quality Assurance Director, Glanbia Nutritionals

Brad Slater started his career with Glanbia in June 2001. Brad Works domestically with 11 different locations in the Glanbia network including the Southwest Cheese joint venture in Clovis, NM and MWC location in St. Johns, MI. Primary focus on dairy manufacturing with facilities that include multiple cheese, whey, colostrum, protein extrusion, co-manufacturing, infant nutrition, and laboratory operations. Multiple experiences within areas quality & food safety, supplier quality, regulatory, technical services, sanitation, laboratory, and site start-ups within Glanbia.

Mindy Smith

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Food Safety and Microbiology Programs Director, Schreiber Foods, Inc.

Mindy is an Indiana native and obtained her BS, MS, and PhD at Purdue University in Food Science with focus on microbiology. After (finally) leaving Purdue, Mindy has worked at Schreiber Foods for about 19 years and has held a variety of positions in manufacturing, including production and QA plant leadership roles. In Mindy's current role, she works with others on the Schreiber Centers of Excellence (COE) EQFS team, collaborating with all of Schreiber's plants globally to establish programs and policies to optimize risk. Mindy's team focuses on PEM programs and oversight, personnel and product protection GMP's, formulation safety, challenge studies, Food Safety Plan guidance, collaborating with process authorities, microbiology (test methods & verification activities, troubleshooting, working with 3rd party labs, etc.), allergens, and other chemical hazards.

Rylee Sterrett

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Corporate Quality Assurance, Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.

Rylee Sterrett works on the Corporate Quality Assurance Team at Prairie Farms Dairy Inc. and has been with the company for 7 years. In her role, she supports multiple of Prairie Farm's manufacturing facilities with food safety and food quality, including assurance that the facilities are always inspection ready and compliant with regulatory, SQF and customer standards. In addition to her daily tasks, she is also responsible for the company's FDA Food Facility Registrations, creating and updating Prairie Farm's corporate quality and food safety policies and procedures, performing internal audits, assisting her team with several internal trainings each year and overseeing the team's Management Trainee Program. Rylee graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Food Science from Michigan State University in the spring of 2017.

Tim Stubbs

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Senior Vice President Food Safety & Product Research, Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy

As Vice President of Product Research & Food Safety, Tim leads product research programs to drive innovation and sales for U.S. dairy products and ingredients on behalf of U.S. dairy farmers. He is also responsible for coordinating the food safety activities of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy including this training class.

Tim has over 25 years of R&D experience in leadership positions at Kraft Foods and Hillshire Brands/Sara Lee. He has a broad background in product development, process research and food safety in businesses including Kraft Naturals, Philadelphia Cream Cheese, Velveeta, Kraft American Singles, DiGiorno, Cool Whip, Miracle Whip, Minute Rice, Sara Lee, Hillshire Farms, Jimmy Dean, and Ball Park.

Tim is active in IFT, is a Certified Food Scientist, and holds a BS in Chemical Engineering from the University of Minnesota.

Brad Suhling

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Corporate Quality Assurance Coordinator, Prairie Farms Dairy Inc.

Brad Suhling is a Corporate Quality Assurance Coordinator at Prairie Farms Dairy, which is a leading manufacturer of fluid milk and other dairy products throughout the Midwest. In his role at Prairie Farms, he is responsible for assuring regulatory, GFSI, and customer compliance programs for a variety of plants. He also is responsible for conducting around 15 internal audits for Prairie Farms facilities annually, assisting facilities with various customer audits, and attending 7 to 8 SQF audits annually.

Brad has become involved with the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shippers through IDFA and serves on the Single Service Container Committee. Along with that, he helps to develop and present internal training classes within the company. These include GMPs, principals of HTST, and principles of Sanitation. He also assisted in developing Prairie Farms preventive controls program and preventive controls qualified individual training for all Prairie Farms facilities. Recently, he has been an integral part rewriting the Prairie Farms Food Safety and Quality Manual, and guiding facilities on Environmental monitoring and follow-up investigations. Prior to this position, Brad was a Quality Assurance manager for a multiple product Dairy in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Brad holds a B.S. in Biology from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

Vance West

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Food Safety and Sanitation Manager, Schreiber Foods, Inc.

Vance West is currently a Food Safety and Sanitation Manager for Schreiber Foods, Inc. He works with plant sanitarians to ensure they have adequate resources and knowledge to maintain a clean and food safe production environment. Vance believes passionate partners empowered with the right knowledge and tools are critical to the success of a sanitation program. Vance also believes that the relationship between Sanitation and Production is symbiotic, and a truly sustainable program takes a focused approach from everyone.

Vance joined Schreiber Foods in 2006. Previous roles within the company have provided him with numerous growth opportunities as the plant process owner for key programs like Sanitation, Quality Assurance, PEM, SQF, HACCP, and Preventive Control plans. Vance is HACCP, PCQI, SQF, and LACF certified. He also completed the Schreiber Certified Sanitarian Program overseen by the Food Sanitation Institute. Vance earned a BS in General Studies from College of the Ozarks in Missouri.

Sara Willett

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Sr. Supply Quality Manager, Sargento Foods Inc.

Sara is currently working as Sr. Supply Quality Manager for Sargento Foods, Inc. in Plymouth, WI. She is responsible for quality and food safety programs for the new and current cheese suppliers. Sara also leads the corporate cheese graders. Prior to Sargento, Sara held various Quality roles with master's Gallery Foods, Inc., Rockline Industries, BASF, and Pillsbury.

Sara earned her Bachelor of Science in Bacteriology from the University of Wisconsin - Madison and completed her MS Management from Marian University. She is a certified Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and an ASQ Certified HACCP Auditor.

Michelle Wiltzius

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Sr Manager - Laboratory Programs & Analytics, Foremost Farms USA

Michelle Wiltzius has been working in the food industry for over 18 years, spanning dairy manufacturing, quality management, and food safety testing. She currently serves as Senior Manager of Laboratory Programs & Analytics at Foremost Farms, where she leads the development and governance of laboratory programs across all FFUSA facilities.

In this role, Michelle provides strategic technical support to quality and laboratory teams, establishes cooperative-wide best practices, and oversees the creation and implementation of standardized testing methods. She also guides validation and calibration protocols for analytical equipment, ensuring consistency, compliance, and operational excellence. Prior to her current position, she served as a Regional Quality Manager at Foremost Farms.

Before joining FFUSA, Michelle held quality leadership roles at Agropur and Saputo. She also served as Director of Laboratory Operations at Cherney Microbiological Services, overseeing a broad portfolio of analytical and microbiological testing services for the food industry.

Michelle holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from St. Norbert College and a Master of Science in Management, Strategy, and Leadership from Michigan State University.

Claire Wirtala

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Senior Food Safety and Quality Manager, Kerry Group

Claire Wirtala is the Senior Food Safety and Quality within the North America Quality Assurance Group at Kerry Group, an international leader in taste & nutrition innovation. Claire is responsible for providing food safety and quality support to the Manufacturing and Quality Assurance teams at two of the WI facilities – Owen and Vesper.

Claire graduated with a B.S. in Food Science and Technology from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and has held positions with Ohly and ALS Food Safety Laboratories.