Promoting Career Pathways within the New York State Food and Agricultural Sector

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Purpose and Objectives

• Type of education and certification for incumbent workers to enable vertical progression.

• Desired base line knowledge and skills of incumbent, underemployed and displaced workers.

• Identification of subject matter for a 24 hour certificate program.

• Preference for group or self paced instruction.
Methods

Online Survey – Quantitative Research

- Hoovers data base indicates 6000+ employers in nine county Finger Lakes region
- Census of 202 employers
- Frame – managers & human resource personnel
- Voluntary survey – (Survey tracker ver 5)
- Email contact three times every 10 days
- 202 companies – 47 (21%) respondents
- Twenty minutes to complete – 20 questions
- Descriptive statistics
Twenty six (26) employ 50 or fewer full-time employees
Nine (9) employ over 50 full-time employees
Thirty five (35) employ less then 10 part time employees
Twenty (20) hire fewer then 25 seasonal employees
Survey Results

Select from the following those subject matter areas that apply to your company.
(Select all that apply)
How important is it that incumbent employees (including third party/contract employees) are trained in food and/or agriculture?

- Very Important (20)
- Important (19)
- Neither Important nor Unimportant (3)
- Unimportant (0)
- Not at all Important (2)
- No Response (3)
What job skills would make displaced workers from other industries more attractive to the Finger Lakes Food Processing Cluster? Select all that apply.
Survey Results

What training is needed for incumbent workers to improve their job skills and their chances for vertical progression within the company? (Select all that apply)
Survey Results

Would you or other employees be interested in attending periodic training and/or receiving updates on food and agricultural related issues?

- No (0)
- Yes (34)
- No Response (5)

Does your company currently have a training/tuition reimbursement program?

- No (32)
- Yes (12)
- No Response (3)
Survey Results

Would employees and/or third party/contract employees be interested in any of the following? (Select all that apply)

- Earning a Food & Agriculture Certificate
- Taking Food & Agriculture Courses
- Other
- No Response
Conclusions and Implications

- Respondents by number of employees (less than fifty or fifty or more) and nature of business (food processing) are similar in response.
- Hard skills: 1) some technical knowledge of food and agriculture, 2) food safety and sanitation and 3) quality assurance.
- Soft skills: 1) writing skills, 2) management, 3) problem solving skills, and 4) applied computer skills.
Conclusions and Implications

• Majority (68%) would use online/internet based training programs but currently rely on one-on-one.
• Although highly valued, majority (70%) of respondents lack funds for education and training.
• Need to identify, expand and/or create line item within existing budgets for education and training. Obtain additional funding and/or reliance on grants.
• A twenty four college credit program offering both group and self paced instruction.
# Food & Agriculture Certificate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGS 150 General Microbiology for Food and Agriculture (new)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG 101- College Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUS 135 - Supervising for the 21st Century</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC 101- Practical Computer Literacy or Software Applications</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPC 141- Interpersonal Speech Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUS 101- Introduction to Sustainability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGS 101 (Bio 113)- Introduction to Agriculture Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGS 200 - Ag Problem Solving - Applications (new)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CREDITS</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
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