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Two TAG Food Safety Consultants Named as IAVA Lead Instructors

The Acheson Group (TAG) is proud to announce that two more of its food safety consultants have met the rigorous standards to achieve the status of Lead Instructor for the FSPCA Intentional Adulteration Vulnerability Assessment (IAVA) course. This accomplishment enables TAG Senior Director Mary Hoffman and Senior Food Safety Manager Angela Ferelli Gruber to independently lead the FSPCA course and issue Certificates of Training to participants.

Through a highly selective process, FSPCA IAVA Lead Instructor applicants are evaluated on three overarching benchmarks: technical proficiency, instructor experience in food defense and/or food safety, and professionalism. To achieve the designation as Lead Instructor, a person must have extensive university or equivalent education related to the food industry; have at least five years of food defense or food safety work in/with the human food industry; and pass a timed exam on the Intentional Adulteration Rule and FDA's draft guidance, which emphasizes vulnerability assessments.

“As TAG responds to the increasing need for compliance with food defense, it is a real pleasure to be able to support our clients with four qualified food defense trainers,” said TAG President and CEO Dr. David Acheson. “It is not an easy certification to achieve and having two more TAG food safety consultants attain this level of expertise – to give TAG a team of four IAVA Lead Instructors – is very impressive.” Along with Hoffman and Ferelli Gruber, TAG's IAVA Lead Instructors include Director of Food Safety Christopher Snabes and Chief Scientific Officer Rolando González.

Mary Hoffman joined TAG with nearly 20 years of experience in the food industry. She has held technical and managerial positions at a variety of food production companies, directing corporate and facility-level quality, R&D, and laboratory teams. Specializing in manufacturing food safety and quality program development and improvement, Hoffman has held responsibility for recall and crisis management and overseeing compliance with regulatory, Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), and customer requirements. Hoffman has led proactive food safety initiatives including supply chain risk mitigation, allergen control, environmental controls and monitoring, microbiological testing, and behavior-based Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) coaching programs. She is a lead instructor for the Preventive Controls for Human Foods Rule and the Intentional Adulteration Vulnerability Assessment (IAVA); is an Advanced SQF Practitioner and FSSC 22000 Internal Auditor. She holds Preventive Controls for Human and Animal Food PCQI, Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP) and HACCP certifications, and a Project Management Certificate from the University of Wisconsin Madison.

Angela Ferelli Gruber has six years' experience providing food producers with scale-appropriate solutions to meet GFSI benchmarked audit standards and/or gain Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule (FSMA PSR) compliance. Her specific areas of expertise include hazard

assessment of pre- and post-harvest produce, controlled environment, and value-added operations, food safety plan and SOP writing, food safety culture development, worker training, hygienic design evaluation, environmental sampling, recall preparedness, and corrective actions mentoring. Before joining TAG, Ferelli Gruber served Maryland agriculture through the University of Maryland produce safety extension. In addition to her work with individual food producers, she developed education and performed on-farm research to address small and mid-size producer needs. Ferelli Gruber is a Lead Instructor for the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and the Intentional Adulteration Vulnerability Assessment (IAVA), an active member of the Northeast Center for the Advancement of Food Safety (NECAFS) and the International Association of Food Protection (IAFP), certified in Better Process Control School for low acid and acidified canned goods, and a Food Defense and Preventive Controls Qualified Individual.

Download photos: [Mary Hoffman](#), [Angela Ferelli Gruber](#), [Christopher Snabes](#), [Rolando Gonzales](#)

About The Acheson Group (TAG). Led by former FDA Associate Commissioner for Foods Dr. David Acheson, The Acheson Group (TAG) is a global food safety and public health consulting group that helps companies assess their unique situation, address gaps, and deploy best practices for operational, regulatory, and reputational risk mitigation. With in-depth industry knowledge and real-world experience, TAG's experts provide remote or onsite assistance in Recall and Crisis Management, EMP & ECP, Food Defense, Supply Chain Management, Food Safety Culture, Infectious Disease Protections, and Training – to help businesses mitigate risks, improve operational efficiencies, and protect your brand. Visit TAG at www.AchesonGroup.com or call 800.401.2239