



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

Bob King, Ph.D.  
Senior Agriculture Specialist  
Agriculture & Life Sciences Institute  
Monroe Community College  
Rochester, New York

Acknowledgements: Jason Brown, Angel Andreu, Andrij Harlan, Mike Haselkorn

# 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.

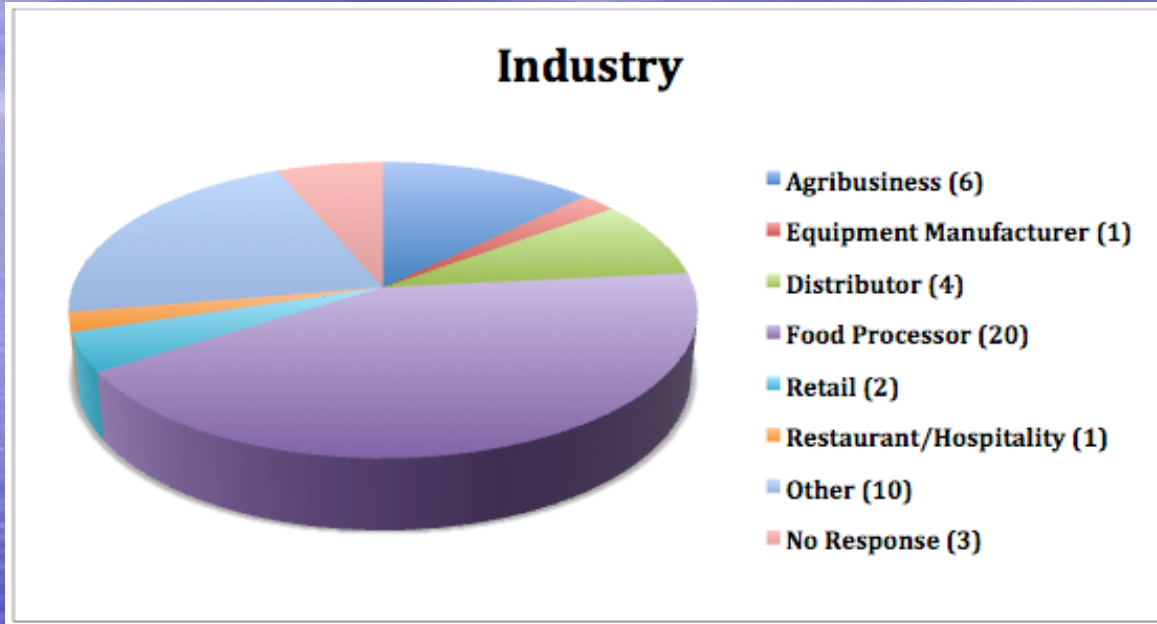


# Methods

## 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

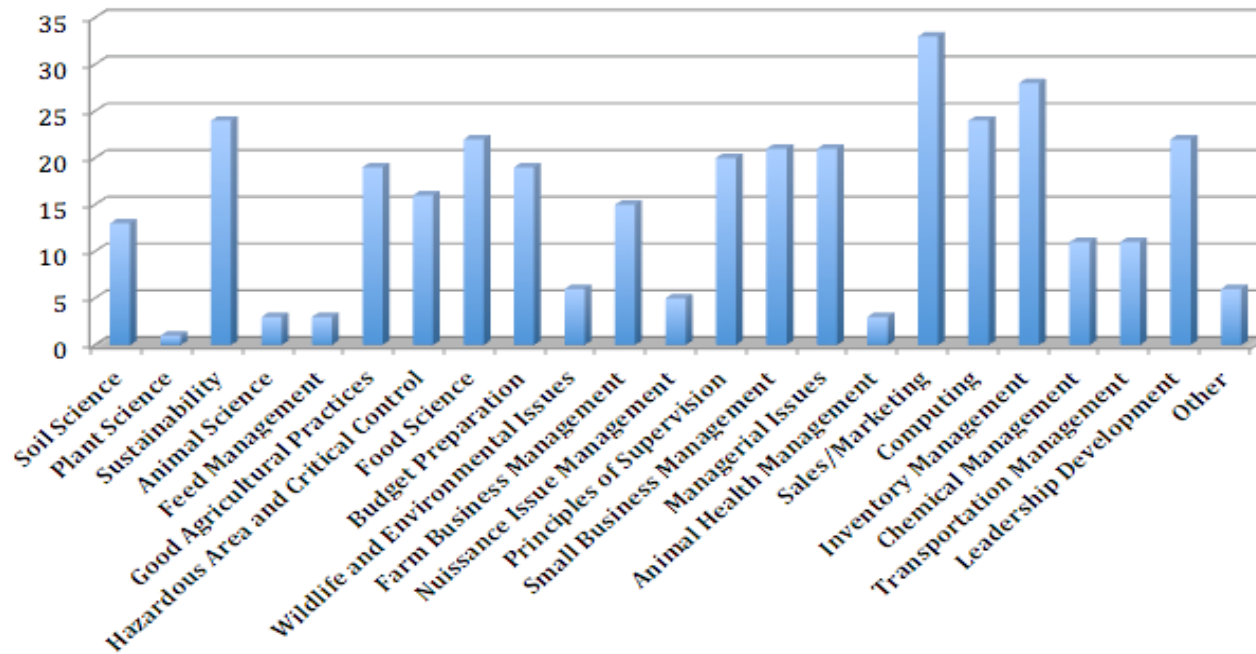
# Survey Results



Twenty six (26) employ 50 or fewer full-time employees  
Nine (9) employ over 50 full-time employees  
Thirty five (35) employ less than 10 part time employees  
Twenty (20) hire fewer than 25 seasonal employees

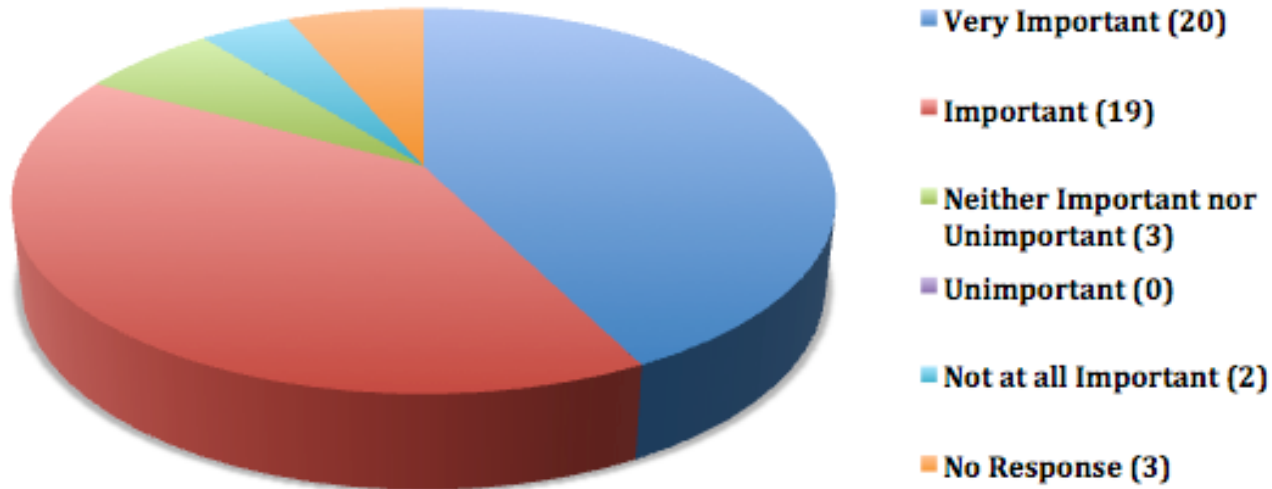
# Survey Results

**Select from the following those subject matter areas that apply to your company.  
(Select all that apply)**



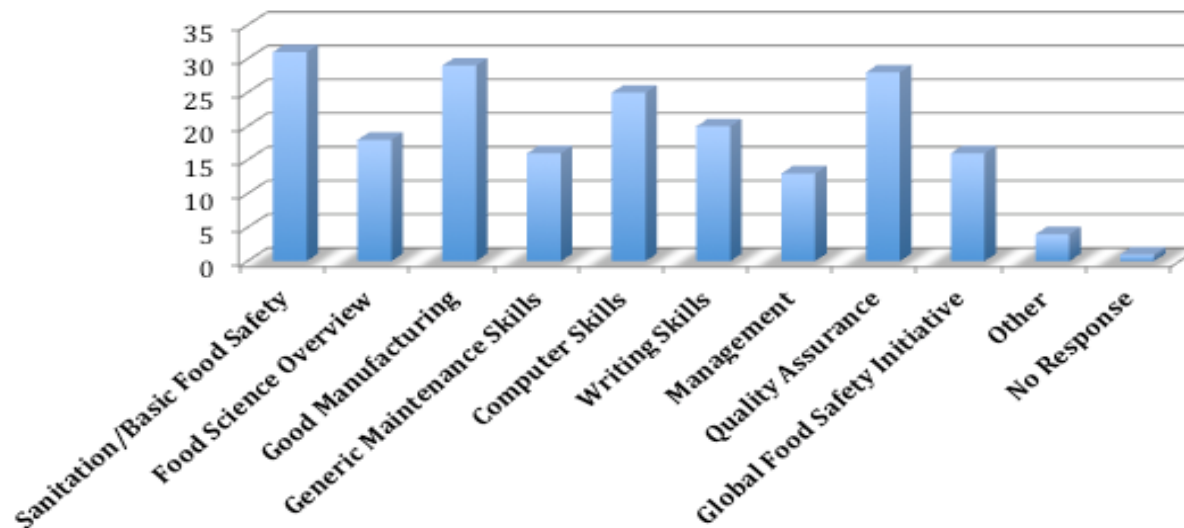
# Survey Results

**How important is it that incumbent employees (including third party/contract employees) are trained in food and/or agriculture?**



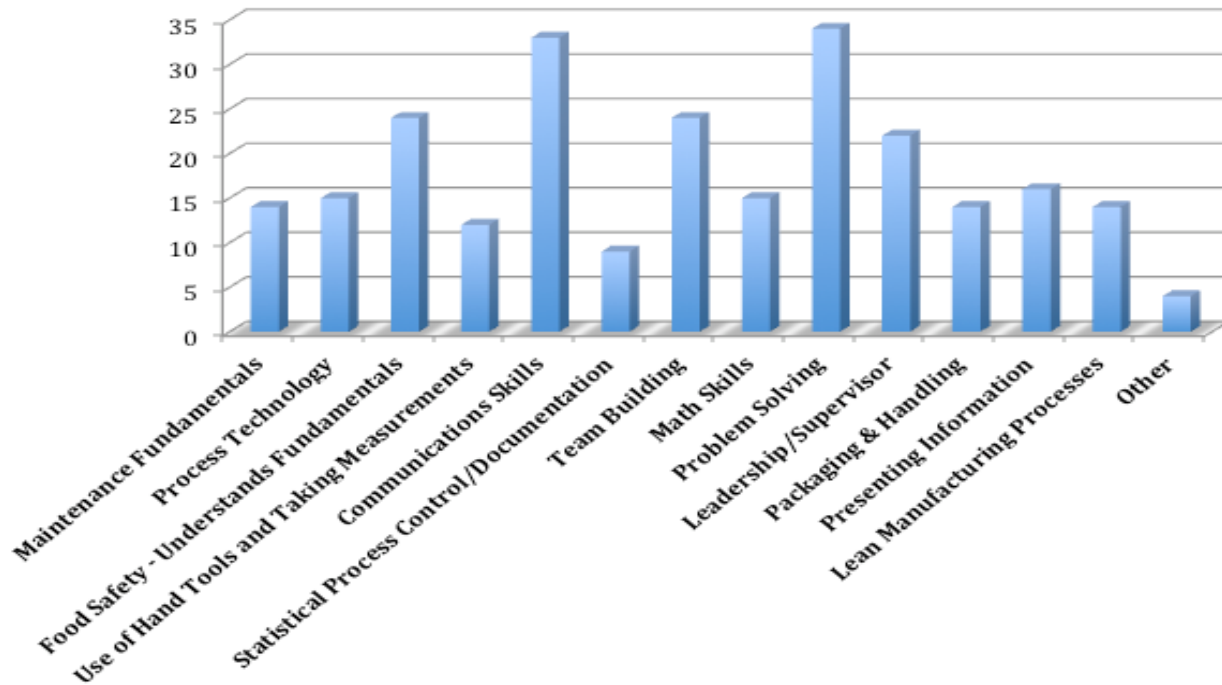
# Survey Results

**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

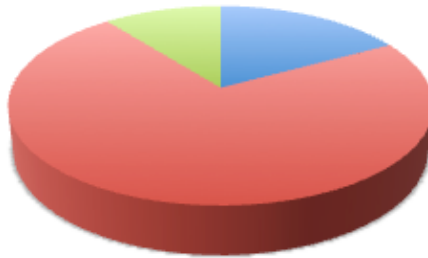
**What training is needed for incumbent workers to improve their job skills and their chances for vertical progression within the company? (Select all that apply)**





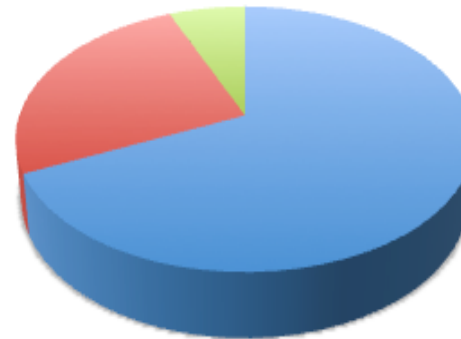
# Survey Results

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



- No (8)
- Yes (34)
- No Response (5)

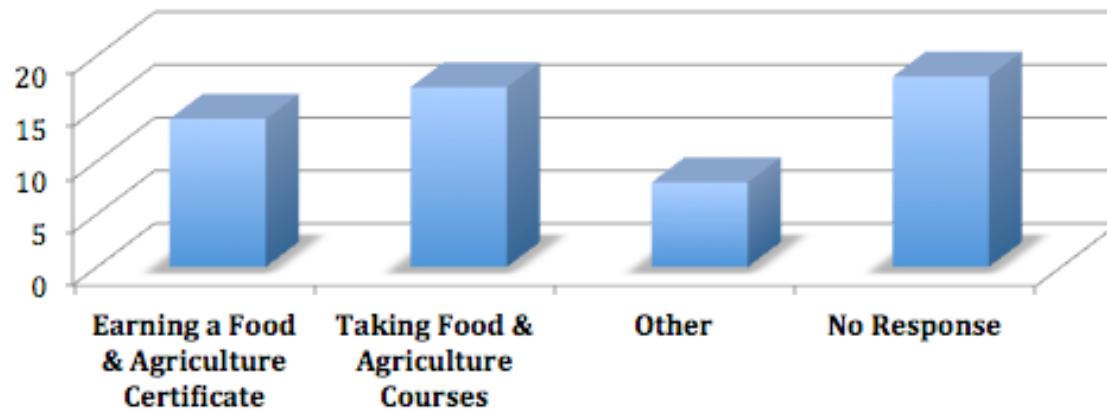
**Does your company currently have a training/tuition reimbursement program?**



- 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)**



# 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

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