



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Cooperative Public Health Service Health District

For Immediate Release

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Local Health District Wins Federal Support for Food Safety Initiatives

As part of a national push to reduce foodborne illness, seven local towns that share a regional health agent have been awarded a federal grant to support their food safety initiatives. The towns, members of the Cooperative Public Health Service health district at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, will receive \$65,000 per year for five years to support improvements in inspection and education.

According to Regional Health Agent Glen Ayers, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) funding will focus on food establishments in the towns of Buckland, Charlemont, Gill, Hawley, Heath, Leyden and Monroe. "This grant will give us the technology to do food inspections on tablets out in the field and allow the Boards of Health to track data on food safety issues identified over time," said Ayers. The FRCOG also has hired a part time Food Safety Agent, Randy Crochier, and will start providing low-cost ServSafe, Choke Saver, and allergy training to town residents and food establishments. The first training is scheduled for March 25 in Buckland.

"The Boards of Health in the health district are committed to keeping the residents and the many visitors to our towns safe from foodborne illness, and are excited about the opportunities this grant offers us," said Doug Telling, Charlemont Board of Health Co-Chair.

The funds are provided as part of FDA's support for advancing conformance with the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards.

On the web: <http://frcog.org/program-services/cooperative-public-health-services/>

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/ProgramStandards/ucm245409.htm>

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