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## **Food and Ag-ISAC Launches New University Partnership Program with Iowa State University, University of Nebraska, Purdue University, and Virginia Tech**

*Bolstering cyber threat intelligence collaboration through trusted communication channels*

WASHINGTON (April 11, 2024) – The [Food and Agriculture - Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (Food and Ag-ISAC) today announced the launch of a new **University Partnership Program** to drive improved collaboration between the industry and leading universities on a range of security issues impacting America’s food and agriculture sector.

The partnership program has launched with four founding collaborators: [Iowa State University of Science and Technology](#), the [University of Nebraska](#), [Purdue University](#) and [PARI](#), and [Virginia Tech](#).

The Food and Ag-ISAC selected these initial university partners since they produce cutting-edge research on a range of issues impacting the food and agriculture industry – from animal and crop health to the integration of emerging technologies into modern agriculture – and for their trusted relationships with the larger agriculture community. As the Food and Ag-ISAC and its initial partners lay the groundwork for further collaborations, more institutions of higher education will be invited to join.

“Managing risks to the food and agriculture sector requires partnership across industry, academia, and government,” said **Jonathan Braley, Director of the Food and Ag-ISAC**. “Our University Partners cultivate not only research that is relevant to our members but also open more opportunities to share threat intelligence from the Food and Ag-ISAC to small and medium-sized organizations. This University Partner Program is an essential step to help defend and protect the sector.”

The collaboration will provide industry access and visibility to the partner universities’ collective body of research, allowing member companies to engage in research on a range of potential risks that could impact the sector. It also provides industry with better insights on emerging technologies being built by the universities for the agriculture industry, furthering next-generation research in partnership with innovators.

“Each of these institutions do amazing research that makes the sector smarter, more connected, and more innovative. This program will help connect their research to companies in the industry who are best able to leverage it and help ensure it is reflective of industry realities,” said **Paul Hershberger, Chair of the Food and Ag-ISAC and Cyber Command Center Leader at Cargill**. “Ultimately, this partnership will produce more meaningful research that can be applied within the industry while creating a pathway for smaller companies and individual farms to plug into the Food and Ag-ISAC. We look forward to adding more institutions to this program.”

The University Partner Program complements existing partnerships the Food and Ag-ISAC has established through its [Association Partnership Program](#), focusing on trade associations; its membership in the [National Council of ISACs](#), which enables active sharing with other critical infrastructure sectors; and its engagement with various government agencies.

Both the Food and Ag-ISAC and the partnered universities expressed their eagerness to begin collaborating for the benefit of both industry and academia. Here is what the universities had to say about their involvement in the new program:

**Josh Detre, Director of the University Consortium for Health, Food, and Agricultural Resilience at PARI:** “Purdue and PARI are thrilled to be founding members of the Food and Ag-ISAC's University Partnership Program. We are excited to share our research with industry colleagues and to work together on transformative solutions for the pressing cybersecurity needs in the food and agriculture sectors. This program will be instrumental in protecting and strengthening our nation's food supply chain, and we are honored to be part of it.”

**Peter Dorhout, Iowa State University Vice President for Research:** “The security of our nation's agriculture and food production systems is critical to our national security. Iowa State has been on the forefront of cybersecurity in agriculture, among many other critical industries. We're honored that the Food and Agriculture - Information Sharing and Analysis Center has selected ISU as a founding collaborator in its University Partnership Program. We look forward to working with our academic and industry partners to ensure that our nation's agriculture and food systems remain the most secure in the world.”

**Mike Boehm, Vice Chancellor of University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources:** “Agricultural security is key to ensuring our global food, fuel, feed, and fiber systems remain steadfast in the face of threats ranging from cyber intrusions, data breaches, biosecurity, and natural events. This is a critically important public-private partnership, and the University of Nebraska is honored to be a part of it.”

**Dan Sui, Virginia Tech Senior Vice President for Research and Innovation:** “The agricultural and food sector is becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Detection, mitigation, and protection against the negative impacts of cyber-attacks is of great importance to national security, agricultural and water systems, and the environment. Virginia Tech has historically invested in this area through our research and educational programs. As a founding member of this very important coalition, we are excited to be able to expand our research

through this collaboration with academic institutions and industry partners to ensure security and safety of our nation's agriculture and food systems.”

To learn more about becoming a Food and Ag-ISAC University Partner, please email [membership@FoodandAg-ISAC.org](mailto:membership@FoodandAg-ISAC.org).

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**About the Food and Ag-ISAC:** Founded in 2023, the Food and Agriculture-Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Food and Ag-ISAC) provides threat intelligence, analysis, and effective security practices that help food and agriculture companies detect attacks, respond to incidents, and share indicators so they can better protect themselves and manage risks to their companies and the sector.

For more information about the Food and Ag-ISAC, please visit [www.foodandag-isac.org](http://www.foodandag-isac.org).

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