

Food Safety Specialty Section

ANNUAL REPORT: 2025–2026

May 1, 2025 to April 30, 2026

I. Officers:

<u>2025–2026</u>	<u>2026–2027</u>
President: Kevin Boyd Vice President: Rene Vinas Vice President Elect: Laura Markley Past President, Councilor: Amy Roe Secretary-Treasurer: Heather Burleigh-Flayer Councilor: Maresha Charles Councilor: Vivian Lu Councilor: Deval Patel Councilor: Christine Thiffault Postdoctoral Representative: Mohamed Fathi Abdallah Senior Student Representative: Kaylyn Dinh Junior Student Representative: Wagner Tamagno	President: Rene Vinas Vice President: Laura Markley Vice President-Elect: Khatera Rahmani Secretary-Treasurer: Christine Thiffault Past President, Councilor: Kevin Boyd Councilor: Maresha Charles Councilor: Matthew Linman Councilor: Vivian Lu Councilor: Carmen Rubio-Armendariz Senior Student Representative: Wagner Tamagno Junior Student Representative: Destini Thornton

Committees:

Session Proposal Committee

II. 2026 Membership total: 197

III. Key Outcomes and Accomplishments in 2025–2026:

The Food Safety Specialty Section accomplished the following activities throughout the year.

- In-person meeting/mixer
- Sponsored session(s) at the Annual Meeting
- Endorsed session(s) at the Annual Meeting
- Mentoring/career development events
- Trainee awards conferred
- Newsletter(s)
- Webinars
- Business meeting (communicated operations/finances to members)
- Utilized/expanded Endowment Fund(s) for Component Group

IV. Collaborative Partnerships with Other SOT Organizations:

The Food Safety Specialty Section collaborated with the following organizations within SOT.

- Computational Toxicology

V. Communication Methods:

The Food Safety Specialty Section stayed in contact with its members throughout the year through the following mechanisms.

- Emails through SOT Headquarters
- Newsletter(s)
- Through Graduate Student/Postdoc Representatives
- LinkedIn

VI. Promotion of Inclusivity

The Food Safety Specialty Section maintained an inclusive organization through the following activities.

- Nominate a diverse slate of candidates for elections
- Solicit equitable input from all executive committee leaders
- Utilize virtual meetings for convening Specialty Section leadership
- Utilize standardized rubrics for judging awards/posters
- Prioritize diversity in selection of speakers/panelists
- Solicit member feedback for development of Specialty Section activities (such as webinar topics)
- Use multiple approaches to communicate with membership
- FS3 has initiated collaborations with the Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists to host Spanish language webinars on timely food toxicology topics

VII. Mentoring and Career Development Activities:

The Food Safety Specialty Section hosted the following mentoring activities throughout the year for its membership.

- Networking luncheon/reception
- Participated in the CAMAN networking event at the annual meeting

VIII. Awards Given:

Trainee	3
Early Career	0
Mid Career	0
Late Career	0

IX. Key Outcomes and Improvements:

- A. Hosting more webinars on timely topics and of broad interest to our members and others outside of food safety
- B. Participating in the CAMAN event gave us a much broader exposure base of students and mentees who may not have realized that there are toxicology opportunities in food.

X. Strategic Plan:

The Food Safety Specialty Section supported the following SOT Strategic Priorities.

- Proactively pursue impactful scientific content
- Support the development and application of tools that advance toxicology
- Effectively communicate scientific advances
- Foster connectivity across scientific disciplines
- Provide training and education that reflects the needs of members
- Provide mentoring and networking opportunities for all career levels

XI. Scientific Topics of Interest:

The Food Safety Specialty Section is interested in seeing the following topic areas developed into sessions at future SOT Annual Meetings.

- The meeting usually covers emerging topics quite nicely. Some thoughts from the food perspective are food biotechnology and the future of food, including new toxicological challenges that will arise and need to be addressed/evaluated to ensure safety. Other topics could include new changes to testing approaches (e.g., OECD tests guidelines or IATAs, qualified NAMs, AI tools), and regulatory updates including both important changes in policy/regulations (US and international - Codex/JECFA) and food substances of public interest that are on agency lists for re-evaluation.

XII. Feedback to the Society:

- A. What is the one thing the Society should be doing that it currently does not do (or does not do effectively) that would be of importance/benefit to the members of the Specialty Section?

Support from SOT is great. The primary challenge for us is the cost of events at the annual meeting and so any opportunities to reduce AV, food costs etc. for the individual specialty sections would be welcomed. On a scientific note, there are more opportunities for the society to consider being visible publicly on broad, toxicological principles that apply to topics being discussed in the mainstream news. Not requesting to take specific positions on a topic, but there are selective opportunities to address from broad, basic toxicology principles.

- B. What is the one thing the Society is currently doing that impacts the Specialty Section that should be changed (e.g., stopped, modified, etc.)?

Hard to find the sponsorship financials to make sure we are including all of the folks in acknowledgments at the appropriate times. Perhaps there are opportunities to make this more readily available. Similarly, the society has set up a donate page for the Specialty Section, but this page does not appear to be updated (e.g., shows a pie graph of donations and is at \$0, which is not updated). If this is the Specialty Section's responsibility to update, we should make that clear (or maybe it is :)), and if not, then there are opportunities to improve the donation page.