



**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US.**

**THIS WEBINAR WILL BEGIN SHORTLY.**



Human Foods Program



# **SERIES TWO | WEBINAR 2**

# **INTERROGATE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS**

**Understand and verify the assumptions that underpin your company culture**

**October 29, 2025**



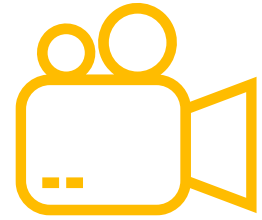
WELCOME BACK! WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!



Recap and materials from "Season One"  
Including the whitepaper compilation



# HOUSEKEEPING



**This event is being recorded** and will be posted on the STOP website and YouTube.



You can earn **1 NEHA-accredited continuing education credit** for this webinar, and 8 for the series. A form can be found on the STOP website.



Attendees will be muted.

**Please use the Q&A function** to ask questions.



Attendees can **“up vote” a question.**

We may not be able to get to all of them.

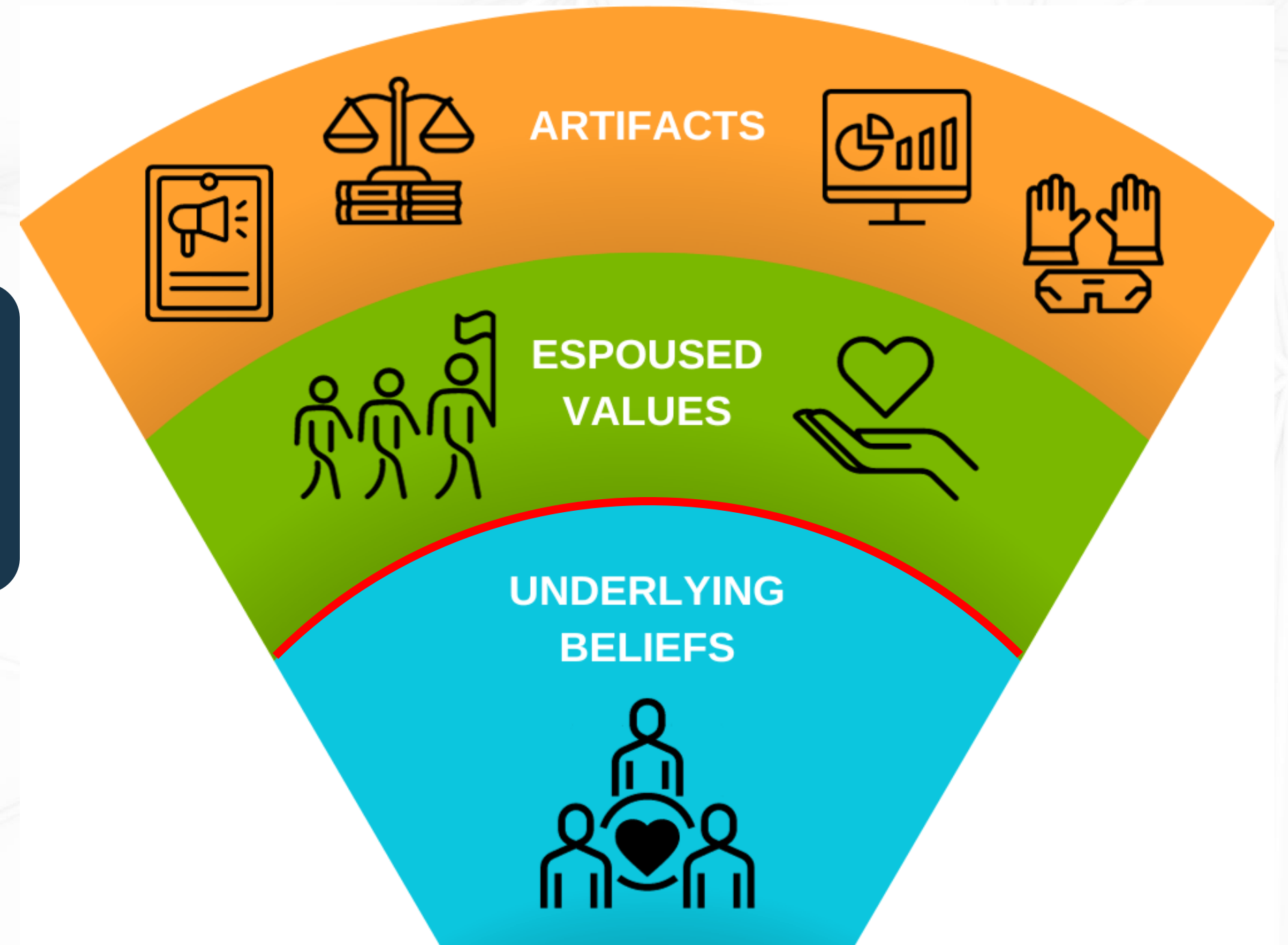


You'll be asked to complete a brief survey after the webinar.  
Please take **2-3 minutes** to share your feedback!

# AGENDA

- 1 Opening Remarks:** Lone Jespersen (Cultivate SA)
- 2 Speaker #1:** Ghita Hansen (Novonesis)
- 3 Speaker #2:** Dr. Bob Reinhard (Conagra Brands)
- 4 Audience Q&A**
- 5 Closing Comments & Next Webinar**

# SERIES TWO OVERVIEW



**Source:** Edgar Schein, levels of organizational culture





# Interrogate Your Food Safety Assumptions

FDA-STOP Webinar, October 29, 2025

Dr. Lone Jespersen



# What Are Cultural Assumptions?

- **Definition:** Cultural assumptions are the unspoken beliefs, norms, and values shared by a group that shape behavior and decision-making—often without conscious awareness\*.

- **Examples in Food Safety:**

- “If it smells fine, it’s safe to eat.”
- → Assumes sensory cues are reliable indicators of microbial safety.
- “We’ve always done it this way.”
- → Assumes traditional practices are inherently safe.
- “Food safety is the responsibility of the quality department.”
- → Assumes food safety is siloed, not a shared responsibility.

- **Why They Matter:**

- These assumptions can influence risk perception, compliance, and organizational culture, sometimes undermining food safety efforts.

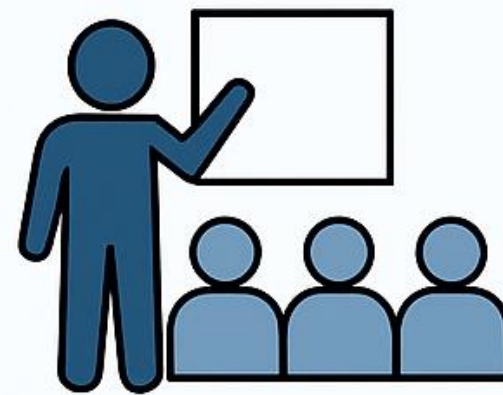


# Changing Cultural Assumptions in Food Safety



## **Step 1** **Make the Invisible Visible**

Use storytelling, data, and examples to surface hidden beliefs.



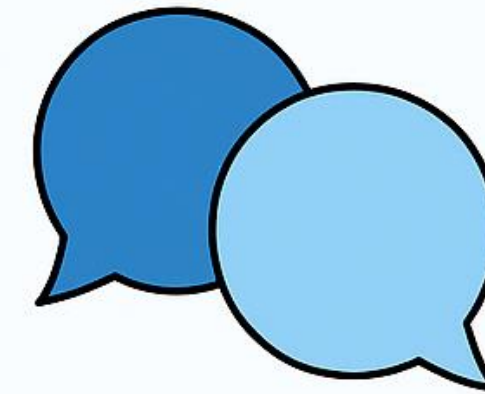
## **Challenge and Reframe**

Replace outdated assumptions with evidence-based thinking.



## **Step 3** **Embed New Norms**

Reinforce through training, leadership, modeling, and daily routines.



## **Step 4** **Sustain Through Dialogue**

Create safe spaces for ongoing conversations.





**Cultivate SA**

Eradicating foodborne tragedies.  
One culture at a time.

**Thank You**





**Ghita Hansen**  
**VP, Manufacturing, Americas,**  
**Enzymes**  
**Novonesis**

# Webinar

# Challenge the Assumptions

# But How to?

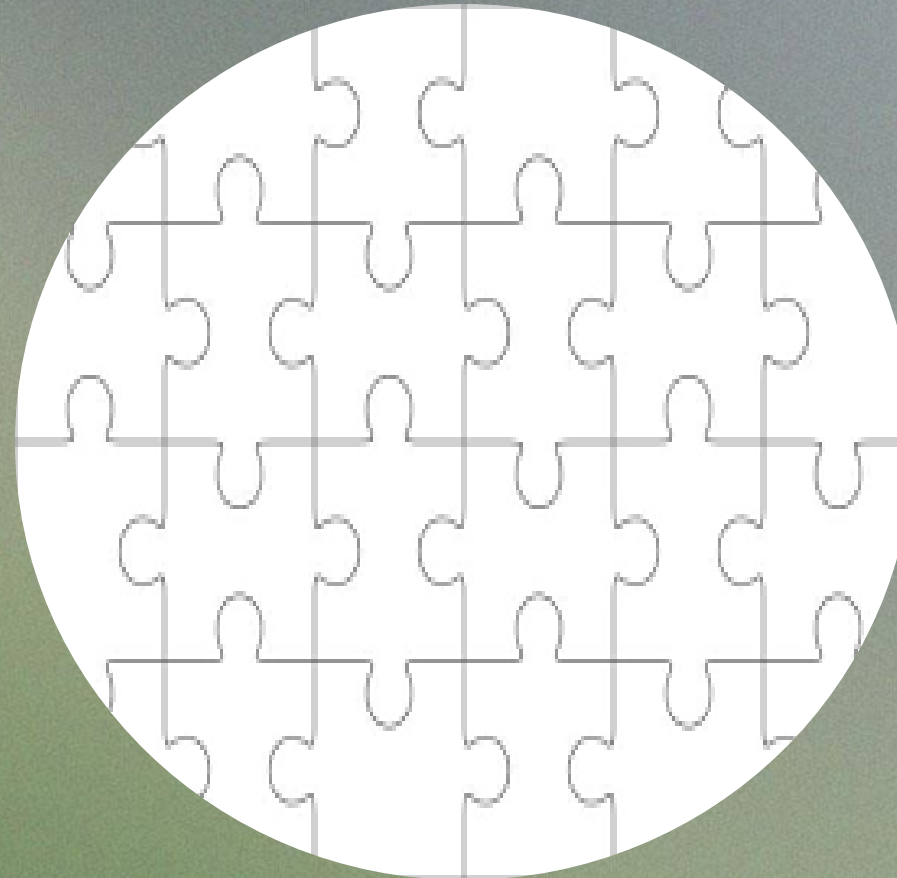


# Key takeaways

## The leader's role in challenging the assumptions



**Shop floor  
engagement – Walk  
the talk**



**Lead sideways,  
upwards,  
downwards.**



**Visuals, rewards and  
decisions - Culture**

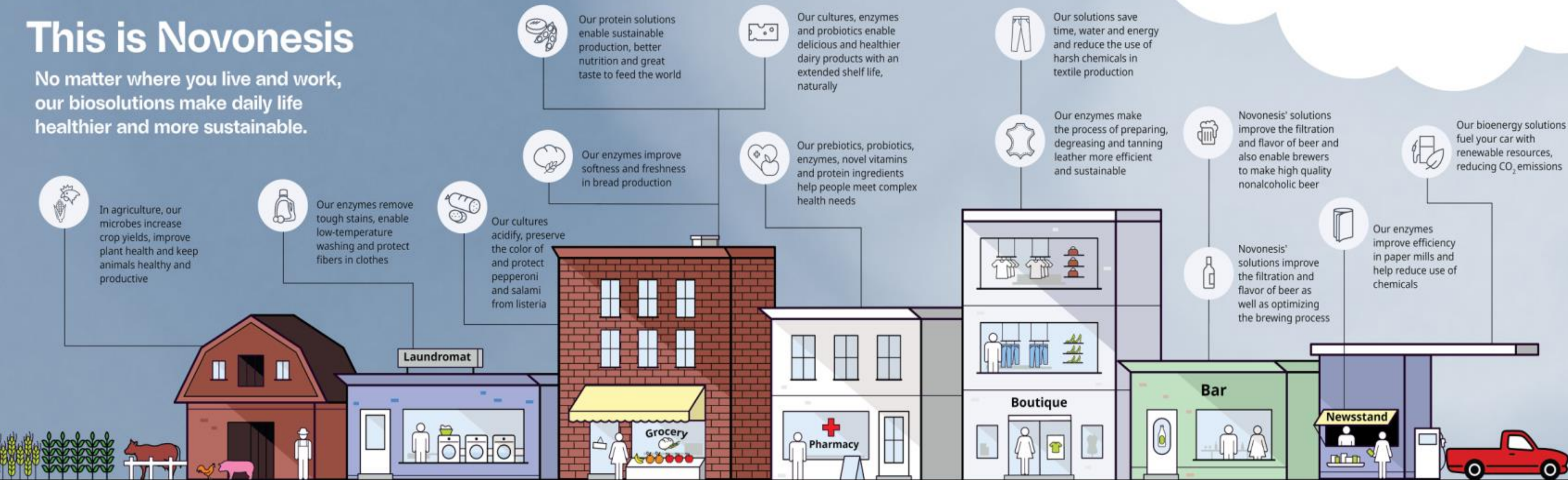


Novonesis is already present in your everyday life –  
our products are used by more than half the world's population

novonesis

## This is Novonesis

No matter where you live and work,  
our biosolutions make daily life  
healthier and more sustainable.





## How to implement a food safety culture – an example

- 2017: Auditors and customers began questioning training, behaviors, and design, emphasizing culture.
- 2019: A comprehensive assessment and customer feedback were used to evaluate food safety culture.
- 2020: A detailed improvement plan and strategic initiatives were created.
- 2020-2021: Initiatives were implemented, focusing on behaviors rather than just rules.
- 2021: Dedicated funding was allocated, guided by a global group, and a new organization for food excellence was established.
- 2022: Food safety culture programs were implemented, enhancing communication and initiating an annual Food Safety Day.
- 2023: Rollout of food safety practices commenced across the organization.
- 2024: Top management and COO team retrained to continuously strengthen the Novonesis team and refine strategy.



# What I have learned



Compliance does not  
create care!



“But we boil it!!”  
It takes time to change  
mindset



Engagement is more  
effective than large  
programs.



# From Molecule to Food: A Comprehensive Journey Through the Food Production Process

- From images of molecules to visuals with food products
- Discussing the intended use of product
- What to honor: behaviors, facilities design





It is a complex puzzle with numerous pieces.

- Set up the framework and complete the components
- Be patient; small steps are better than one step forward and two steps back
- Celebrate initiatives and successes in diverse ways





Thank  
you





# **Bob Reinhard**

SVP, Food Safety Quality &  
Regulatory Affairs  
**Conagra Brands**





FSQRAIRISE

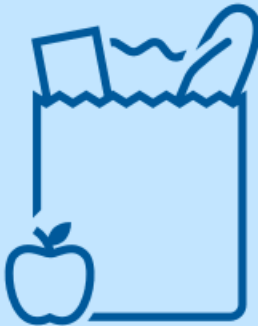
# INTERROGATE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS CULTURE CHECKPOINT

DR BOB REINHARD  
CONAGRA BRANDS  
SVP FOOD SAFETY, QUALITY, AND REGULATORY





# CONAGRA IS COMMITTED TO NOURISHING OUR PEOPLE, PLANET & COMMUNITIES

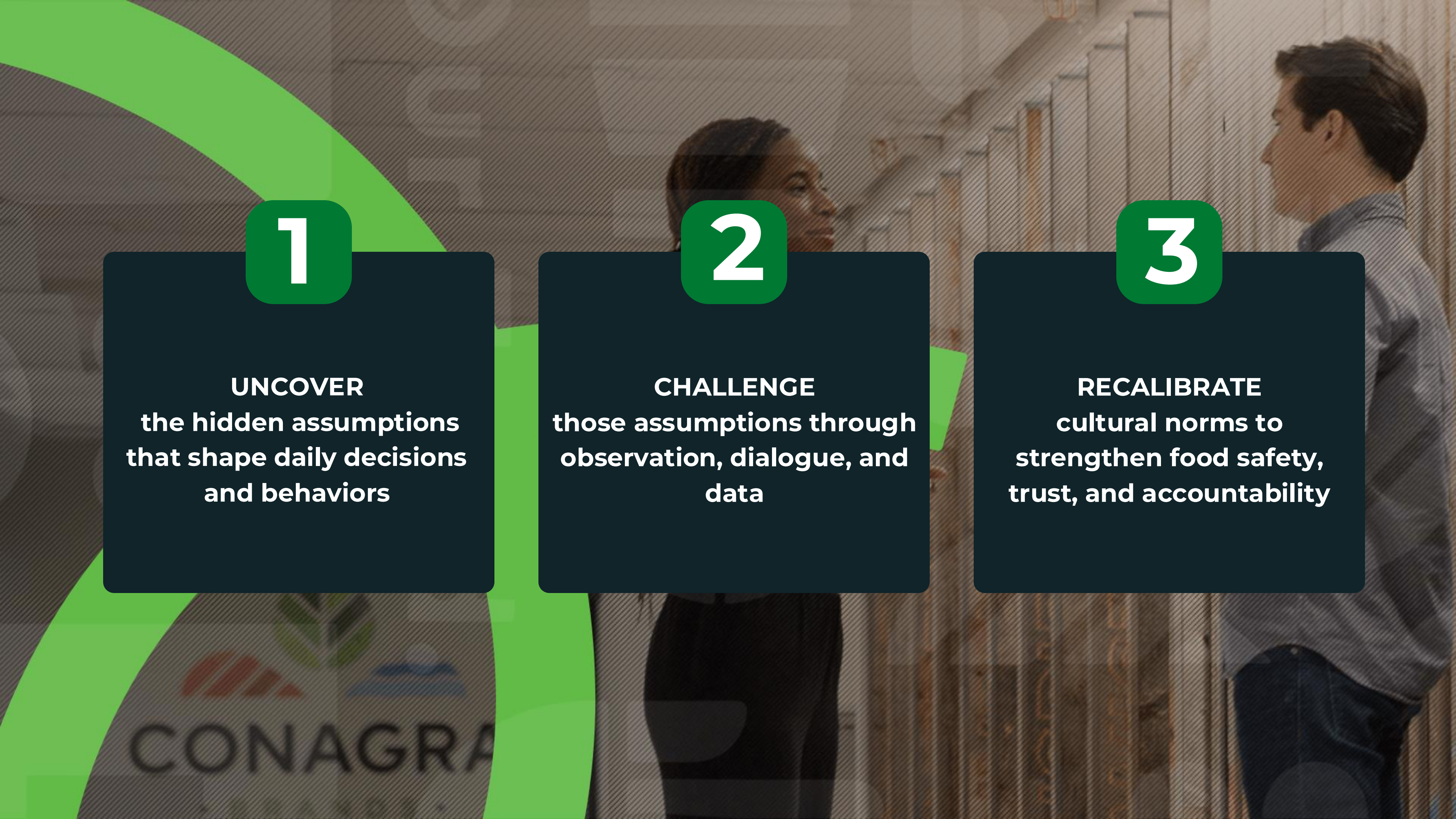
| GOOD FOOD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | RESPONSIBLE SOURCING                                                                                                                                                                                          | BETTER PLANET                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | STRONGER COMMUNITIES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div></div> <div><p>We continuously strive to make safe, delicious and nutritious foods, while providing the information that consumers need to make educated food choices.</p></div> | <div></div> <div><p>We approach the sourcing of ingredients and packaging materials with care and consideration.</p></div> | <div></div> <div><p>We're focused on reducing our impact on climate change, sustainable packaging &amp; agriculture, preserving water resources and eliminating waste in our operations.</p></div> | <div></div> <div><p>We care deeply about our employees and the communities we live and work in. We make it a priority to invest in their growth, success &amp; wellbeing.</p></div> |





**EVERYONE NEEDS HELP**





**1**

**UNCOVER**  
the hidden assumptions  
that shape daily decisions  
and behaviors

**2**

**CHALLENGE**  
those assumptions through  
observation, dialogue, and  
data

**3**

**RECALIBRATE**  
cultural norms to  
strengthen food safety,  
trust, and accountability

CONAGRA



# Understanding Assumptions

Types and Consequences in Food Safety

*Examples*

**"Training equals understanding"**

**"If it's not reported, it's not happening"**

**"Everyone knows the protocol"**

**"We don't have time to change"**

## TYPES OF ASSUMPTIONS

Assumptions can be explicit or implicit, individual or shared; recognizing these distinctions is crucial for evaluating their impact on food safety culture.

## CONSEQUENCES OF FALSE ASSUMPTIONS

Outdated or inaccurate assumptions can lead to serious safety breaches, undermining trust and increasing the risk of contamination in food handling processes.



# Building a Safer Food Culture

Interrogate Assumptions. Strengthen Culture. Improve Food Safety.

At Conagra Brands, food safety is at the core of everything we do. If  
we *SEE* something, we *DO* something.

We ensure our food is safe and everyone is empowered to do the right thing.

## ASSUMPTIONS IMPACT FOOD SAFETY

**Unexamined assumptions can lead** to serious food safety risks. Regularly questioning these beliefs ensures a proactive approach to maintaining safety culture.

## CONTINUOUS REFLECTION NEEDED

**Ongoing reflection and verification** of assumptions foster a culture of food safety. Making this practice routine enhances awareness and accountability across teams.

See Something, Say Something, Do Something

**SHOW UP**





# Top Learnings

**1 QUESTIONING NORMS**  
Challenge existing beliefs

**3 AUDITING PRACTICES**  
Review food safety protocols

**2 COLLECTING FEEDBACK**  
Gather diverse insights

**4 OBSERVING BEHAVIOR**  
Monitor team actions

Everyone Plays a Role in Food Safety Culture

**GO DO GREAT THINGS**

# Audience Q&A





# NEXT WEBINAR

December 17, 2025 @ 11am Central

## MEASURE THE POWER OF DECLARED VALUES

How your metrics should reinforce the values you hold.



Joan Menke  
***Van Drunen Farms***



Greg Pritchard  
***Nestlé***



*Learn more & register!*