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# SAFHER<sup>®</sup>

## **Partners Chosen for SAFHER Development**

*System for Agriculture, Food, Health, E-Inspections, and Registration Represents Collaboration and Innovation for States*

**(York, PA)** – January 11, 2023 The next step in developing the System for Agriculture, Food, Health, E-Inspections, and Registration (SAFHER) was announced today. After nearly three years of stakeholder discovery and a rigorous RFP procurement process, the SAFHER project team and governing council have chosen Precise Software Solutions, Inc., as the implementation manager and Appian as the technology platform for the next phase of SAFHER development.

SAFHER will be a state-of-the-art web-based platform that can be adopted by state or local regulatory programs to capture their licensing, inspections, complaints, compliance and enforcement, and reporting. This platform will support a myriad of programs including retail food, agriculture, animal food, manufactured food, seed, pesticides, and fertilizer.

The SAFHER procurement process, guided by a governing council that represents all potential stakeholders has been focused on end-user inclusion. SAFHER advocates say this discovery process was critical to supporting long-term change in governmental oversight and foundational in the success of SAFHER.

“Doing a proper analysis and including all stakeholders while continually involving them in discussion helps with standardization and lowers the ongoing cost of our development by using a consortium,” says Jon Adkins, CIO for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

Adkins adds, though, that the work requiring continued stakeholder engagement is just beginning.

“There's no better way to develop software that will truly change government than to be consistent in your involvement and feedback throughout the development the implementation life cycles,” Adkins adds.

In addition to identifying needs during the vendor selection process, it was critical to find partners who align with SAFHER’s vision and guiding principles, understand the obstacles stakeholders have, and encourage continual process. Precise and Appian were standouts.

Precise brings significant regulatory problem-solving experience coupled with a belief in the mission.

“SAFHER's mission is to develop a safer, more collaborative regulatory world. This mission touches every citizen in this country, including our families, our teams, and our communities,” says Zhensen Huang, CEO of Precise. “It impacts the safety of the food that's being served on our kitchen tables every day. We're very excited to be part of this great journey alongside AFDO, the state participants, and other stakeholders in supporting such an impactful mission.”

“Appian is well equipped to integrate current and future systems that will provide consistency and coordination between state and local governments,” says Vishal Hanjan, Industry Lead, U.S. State, and Local Government at Appian. “This includes licensing registration inspections, managing complaints, and all aspects of compliance and administration. We've seen success in our work with the FDA, the major stakeholder in the SAFHER project, and we are eager to bring this expertise to SAFHER.”

“SAFHER is the best game in town. It won't reflect what a vendor thinks we need or what a single state working with a single vendor has developed. It's going to be developed based on our collective needs,” explains Earl Thornton, member of the project governing council and IT Director of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

“Designed from the ground up, it will provide what we all need to regulate within the agricultural and food safety arenas,” Thornton continues. “It's based on state-of-the-art-technology that will benefit us today and into the future. It will also benefit from the best ideas of so many organizations and will continue to grow as the regulatory landscape changes over time.”

SAFHER is funded by a nearly \$18 million FDA cooperative agreement with the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) that spans three years and will allow the FDA and regulatory partners to work together in new ways by leveraging technology to share one another's work, data, and processes. Robust and interconnected regulatory data management systems will advance our partnerships to ensure the optimal use of resources and maximize the impact on public safety. This new data management

system will allow regulatory programs across the country access to cutting-edge technology a state or local agency could not typically afford on their own.

### **About Precise**

Precise Software Solutions, Inc. (Precise), an SBA 8(a) program participant, is an innovative small business with a proven record of success delivering agile and innovative solutions to government organizations so they can perform their public mission more effectively.

### **About Appian**

Appian is the unified platform for change. We accelerate customers' businesses by discovering, designing, and automating their most important processes. The Appian Low-Code Platform combines the key capabilities needed to get work done faster, Process Mining + Workflow + Automation, in a unified low-code platform. Appian is open, enterprise-grade, and trusted by industry leaders.

### **About the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO)**

AFDO is a well-recognized national organization that represents state, local, territorial, and tribal (SLTT) food protection regulatory agencies including all the agencies that regulate retail foods, manufactured foods, and produce. The association's mission is to act as a thought leader for and a resource to SLTT regulatory agencies as they develop strategies to resolve challenges and promote public health and consumer protection related to the regulation of food, medical products, and cosmetics. Since 1896, AFDO has been at the forefront of the push for an integrated food safety system.