Good Agricultural Practices and Written Food Safety Plans

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Purdue Extension

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Produce is Different

Likely to be contaminated? Yes No
Interventions at processor? Good Weak
Interventions by retailer/consumer? Excellent Poor
Eating trends? Steady Increasing
Eaten raw? No Yes
It will Take a Farm to Fork Approach

- Farm
- Packing facility
- Transport
- Cooling/Storage
- Distribution
- Repacking
- Transport
- Retail
- Direct Market
- Home/Restaurant
- Fork
GAPs are the conditions, growing practices, and harvesting practices recommended for minimizing risk of microbial contamination to produce safe and wholesome fruits and vegetables.

National GAPs Program
www.gaps.cornell.edu
Reduce the risk of contamination by a foodborne pathogen by addressing the following areas:

Worker Health and Hygiene
Animals, Manure, and Biosolids
Water (irrigation and postharvest)
Harvest, Transport, and Packing
Good Agricultural Practices

GAPs Awareness and Training

Farm Self Assessment

Written Farm Food Safety Plan

Plan Implementation

Third Party Audit

Certification
On Farm Food Safety Plan: Where to Begin?

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A Food Safety Plan Is A Written Guide Outlining What You Do To Lessen The Chance Of Someone Getting Sick From Eating Contaminated Food
Food Safety Plans

• Used for guidance (is required) when a food safety audit is conducted
• Do not need to be excessive or complex
• You will be held accountable for what is in the plan – don’t include unattainable goals
• Growers are currently taking steps to insure food safety on their farm – the written plan documents what is already being done

Relax!!! This is NOT rocket science!!!
Food Safety Plans

• Describes farm (*mission/commitment to food safety, maps-layout/soils/drainage, crops, floor plans etc.*)
• Identifies person responsible for food safety (*might want to let that person know!*)
• Outlines procedures you will follow
• Includes examples of forms used to verify GAP... *Where will the logs be kept?*

TIPS...
• *Organize our plan according to the audit checklist*
• *Only include practices that you can/will implement*
Food Safety Plans Cover:

• Farm operation and farm facilities
• Manure storage and handling
• Animal exclusion (domestic & wild)
• Irrigation and drainage management
• Agricultural inputs
• Equipment sanitation
• Harvest and postharvest handling
• Employee training program
• Restroom & hand washing facilities
• Traceability system
• Crisis management strategy
Start with What You Know!

• Assess your operation, pre-plant through postharvest handling.
• Identify areas that you know are high risk or areas of concern.
• Consider farming practice modifications that will reduce the risks AND are economically feasible.
• Document your progress.
Risk Assessment Resources

- Food Safety Begins on the Farm – Self Assessment (National GAPs)
  www.gaps.cornell.edu

- Food-A-Syst (Kansas State)
  www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/FOODASYSBOOK.pdf
Getting Started

— Begin with a Mission Statement
  • Why you are doing what you do
  • Should generally address your commitment to food safety
  • Designate someone to implement, oversee, and work with the auditor

“The following safety procedures have been implemented into the daily activities of Acme Farms to aid in insuring a safe and quality product. John Doe is responsible for implementation and oversight of this food safety plan.”
• Document your current food safety program
  – Incorporate all the steps taken to implement food safety
    • What you have been doing
    • Outline procedures
    • Include examples of forms used for documentation
  – Keep in mind who will be using this document
    • Examples:
      – Content requirements for third party audit
      – Appropriate language for employees
  – Suggest starting with USDA Audit Verification Checklist
    • Based on the US Food and Drug Administration’s “Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.”
John Smith is Food Safety Manager

All employees and all visitors are required to follow proper sanitation and hygiene practices.

All workers are required to wash their hands before returning to work.

Smoking, gum chewing and eating are not allowed where product is stored or handled.

Workers and visitors with diarrheal disease or symptoms of other infectious diseases are prohibited from handling fresh produce.

Workers and visitors are instructed to seek prompt treatment of clean first aid supplies for cuts, abrasions or other injuries.

Workers and visitors are prohibited from bringing personal items into the handling or storage areas.

Workers and visitors must report any illnesses or accidents to a supervisor or to management.

Clean drinking water is available to all workers and water quality is tested once a year and records are kept.

All employees are taught to wash their hands by following this procedure:

- Wet their hands with warm water. Apply soap and working up a lather.
- Rub hand together for at least 20 seconds.
- Clean under the fingernails and between the fingers.
- Rub the fingertips of each hand in suds on palm of opposite hand.
- Dry hands with a single use towel.

All toilets and restrooms are serviced and cleaned on a daily basis and logs are kept.

All conveyances are inspected at time of arrival.

Conveyances are required to be clean, in good physical condition and free from obvious objectionable odors, dirt and/or debris at time of loading.

The facility is clean and maintained in an orderly manner.

Refrigerated rooms are monitored for temperature and logs are maintained.

Measures are taken to exclude animals or pests from the facility.

There is an established pest control program for the facility.

Service reports for the pest control program are available for review.

A recall program is in place and a mock recall is done every six months.
A Food Safety Plan Developed In New York As an Example for Growers


The Henderson Farm Grower Food Safety Manual


Available from UMass Extension
Be Active and Be Ready

• Make changes to practices as needed. Document!
• Keep good records of all production practices, especially manure use and water tests.
• Teach employees the importance of prevention strategies.
• Work with upstream neighbors and local watershed committees on management goals
• Update your plan regularly. Consider it a “living document”.
WRITE IT DOWN!
Early and often!
Plan Writing Tips

• Write a plan for your operation
• Include what you will do
  (not what you hope you will do)
• Update your plan regularly
Good Agricultural Practices for Managing Food Safety Risks Continue to Evolve

As new research becomes available, recommended practices may change!
How Should It Be Done?

• The Hard Way
• The Easy Way
Three Easy Steps

- Choose A Ready Made Plan
- Change The Plan To Suit Your Needs
- Submit The Plan To A Third Party Auditor
Use a Template or Audit Checklist as a Guide

FSP4U Univ. of Minnesota Template
http://safety.cfans.umn.edu/fsp4u/

On Farm Food Safety http://onfarmfoodsafty.org/

Harmonized GAP Standards

Audit Checklists

USDA www.ams.usda.gov/

Primus http://www.primuslabs.com/Services/StandardGAP.aspx
http://www.primusgfs.com/

Others
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<th>Questions</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<td>cleaned on a scheduled basis.</td>
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<td>G-11 Smoking and eating are confined to designated areas separate from</td>
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<td>where product is handled.</td>
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<td>disease are prohibited from handling fresh produce.</td>
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<td>G-13 There is a policy describing procedures which specify handling/</td>
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<td>disposal of produce or food contact surfaces that have come into</td>
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<td>contact with blood or other body fluids.</td>
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<td>G-14 Workers are instructed to seek prompt treatment with clean</td>
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<td>first aid supplies for cuts, abrasions and other injuries.</td>
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<td>G-15 Company personnel or contracted personnel that apply regulated</td>
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<td>pre-harvest and/or post harvest materials are licensed. Company</td>
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<td>personnel or contracted personnel applying non-regulated materials</td>
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<td>have been trained on its proper use.</td>
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<td><strong>1.1. Management Responsibility</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1.1.1. A food safety policy shall be in place.</strong></td>
<td>A written policy shall outline a commitment to food safety, in general terms, how it is implemented and how it is communicated to employees, and be signed by Senior Management.</td>
<td>The auditor observes the food safety policy, observes that it is signed by Senior Management, and observes that it has been communicated to all employees in a manner that can be understood.</td>
<td>The operation creates or revises the policy, or its communication to employees, to be in compliance.</td>
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<td><strong>1.1.2. Management has designated individual(s) with roles, responsibilities and resources for food safety functions.</strong></td>
<td>The food safety plan shall designate who has the responsibility and authority for food safety, including a provision for the absence of key personnel. Twenty-four hour contact information shall be available for these individuals in case of food safety emergencies. The organization’s senior management shall determine and provide, in a timely manner, the resources needed to implement and maintain the food safety plan.</td>
<td>Auditor observes that the food safety plan has identified individual(s) for key food safety activities. Auditor verifies that procedures include provisions for when the identified individual is not present. Auditor observes whether Senior Management has provided the resources needed to implement and maintain the food safety plan.</td>
<td>Operation identifies individual(s) for key food safety activities in the food safety plan. Operation identifies actions to be taken when the identified individual(s) are not present. Senior Management commits resources needed to implement and maintain the food safety plan.</td>
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<td><strong>1.1.3. There is a disciplinary policy for food safety violations</strong></td>
<td>There shall be a policy that establishes corrective actions for personnel who violate established food safety policies or procedures.</td>
<td>Auditor observes the policy and checks for examples of enforcement</td>
<td>The operation creates or revises the policy, or its communication to employees, to be in compliance.</td>
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<td><strong>1.2. Food Safety Plan</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1.2.1. There shall be a written food safety plan that covers the operation.</strong></td>
<td>The food safety plan shall identify all locations of the operation and products covered by the plan. The plan shall address potential physical, chemical, and biological hazards and hazard control procedures, including monitoring, verification and recordkeeping, for the following areas: water, soil amendments, field sanitation, production environment, and worker practices.</td>
<td>Auditor shall observe the food safety plan and verify that the plan has considered potential biological, chemical and physical hazards and has identified preventive controls for hazards that may reasonably affect food safety.</td>
<td>Operation develops or completes a food safety plan for all locations of operation.</td>
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<td>Food Safety Plan</td>
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General Areas for Consideration

- General Questions
- Farm Review
- Field Harvest and Packing Activities
- House Packing Facilities
- Storage and Transportation
- Traceback
Which Plan Should Be Chosen?

- Depends On Type Of Audit
- Depends On Third Party Auditor
- Audits Are Customer Driven
- Single Or Multiple Audits
Types of Documents

- Policies (What You Do)
- Procedures (How You Do It)
- Records (Who Did What When)
- Maps (Where Is It)
- Flow Chart (How It Works)
Writing a Food Safety Plan

It’s a lot to swallow!!!
Take it one “bite” at a time...

YOU CAN DO IT!!!
Acknowledgments

Portions of this presentation adapted from the work of:

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Scott Monroe, Extension Educator, Purdue
Amy Thompson, Extension Educator, Purdue
North Carolina State University MarketReady Team
Questions?