

Preparing for Produce Safety Inspections

FAQ



Produce Safety Rule

What is the Produce Safety Rule (PSR)?

Under the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Food Safety Modernization Act, the **Produce Safety Rule** establishes for the first time, scientifically defensible minimum standards for the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of fruits and vegetables grown for human consumption.

Is my farm subject to regulation under the Produce Safety Rule?

If your farm had an average \$28,075 or more in annual produce sales between 2017 and 2019, and you grow one of the commodities U.S. Food and Drug Administration has identified as generally eaten raw, your farm is likely subject to regulation under the PSR. Fruits, fungus such as mushrooms, herbs, nuts, and most vegetables that are typically consumed uncooked are examples of produce inspected under the PSR.

What produce is not covered by the Produce Safety Rule?

The following produce are classified as rarely consumed raw and therefore are the only commodities that are not covered by the rule: Asparagus, Black Beans, Great Northern Beans, Kidney Beans, Lima Beans, Navy Beans, Pinto Beans, Garden Beets (roots and tops), Sugar Beets, Cashews, Sour Cherries, Chickpeas, Cocoa Beans, Coffee Beans, Collards, Sweet Corn, Cranberries, Dates, Dill (seeds and weed), Eggplants, Figs, Ginger, Hazelnuts, Horseradish, Lentils, Okra, Peanuts, Pecans, Peppermint, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Winter Squash, Sweet Potatoes, and Water Chestnuts.

In addition, PSR also excludes produce that is grown for personal consumption and/or commodities that are not in their raw agricultural form.

What will inspectors look for during inspection?

All inspections are announced and are scheduled based on what is going on at the farm. Throughout the 6-8 hour inspection, inspectors will walk through your farm to observe:

- Worker health & hygiene practices and training.
- Agricultural water quality (water testing record review begins in 2022).
- Handling, conveyance, and storing of biological soil amendments of animal origin.
- Evidence of domesticated and wild animal intrusion, both indoor and outdoor.
- Food safety measures that apply to growing, harvesting, packing, and holding activities.
- Equipment, tools, buildings, and sanitation procedures.
- Accuracy of food safety records.

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Safe Produce Indiana is a partnership between the Indiana Department of Health, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, and Purdue University Extension Office to provide Good Agricultural Practices resources to all Indiana growers.

Check out Safe Produce Indiana for more information!

www.safeproducein.com

Preparing for the inspection

What type of technical assistance is available?

Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) Food Safety Farm Consultants are available to help growers understand the requirements of the Produce Safety Rule (PSR) and provide produce safety educational materials. Services are at no cost to farmers and range from brief telephone discussions to on-farm visits.

Can I sign up for a mock inspection?

Yes! Free and confidential On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRR) are available prior to inspection via the Indiana Department of Agriculture (ISDA). Produce safety experts from IDOH, ISDA, and Purdue University Extension will walk through your operation and recommend easy, practical ways for your farm to meet Produce Safety Rule requirements. All notes and pictures taken during this voluntary review will be returned to you at the end of the mock inspection. Please reach out to Tari Gary at 317-407-9802 for more information.

Do I need to complete the Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) training prior the inspection?

According to PSR, at least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed a food safety training that meets the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) standard. Currently, the only qualified course available for Indiana growers is the PSA training offered by the Purdue University Extension office. Please go to the Safe Produce Indiana webpage (<https://ag.purdue.edu/extension/safeproduce/Pages/training.aspx>) for details.

What happens if the inspector finds something during the inspection? Will my farm be shut down?

No. All initial inspections will be **educational** in nature and violations will not be written unless it poses an imminent public health risk. If any practices do not satisfy the produce rule requirements, the inspector will discuss each concern and provide an opportunity for correction during the walk through and at the exit interview. If the deficiency cannot be corrected at the time of inspection, the inspector will work with you to determine a reasonable time frame for correction.

What if I am exempt from the rule?

If you think your farm should be exempted due to the type of produce grown, or the majority of your produce is sold direct to local customers, the inspector will only be asking for records that support your exemption status. Record verification may require an in-person visit, but exempt and qualified-exempt farms will not be subject to full inspection.