

Small Farm Food Safety, Fresh Produce—Part 3: What’s Wrong with This Picture?¹

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Small Farm Food Safety, Fresh Produce is a short, interactive training program that introduces food-safety concepts as applied to fresh produce. The concepts are based on the FDA’s *Guide to Minimized Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* (FDA-GAPs).

Part 3 consists of three video clips that demonstrate some of the potential poor food-safety practices on farms.

Time Required: 10 minutes

Materials for Trainer

Three video clips for the exercise “What’s Wrong with This Picture?”—all included on the DVD.*

Advance Preparation for Trainer

- Review *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*, US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, October 1998.
- Preview the video clips and our suggestions for the problems that are illustrated by them.

Materials for Participants

None

Objectives

- **Application objective:** Participants will be able to identify a number of poor food-safety practices on the farm.
- **Learning objective:** Participants will increase their knowledge of possible contamination points in a farm operation.

Procedure

This activity uses three video clips to graphically demonstrate some of the poor food-safety practices that can occur on farms. The purpose of the exercise is to enhance participants’ ability to identify potential hazardous practices and to get them to think about what occurs on their own farms.

- Before showing the video clips, tell participants that as they watch the video clips they should identify and write down conditions, situations, and activities that increase the risk of microbial contamination.
- Review their responses to each video clip immediately after viewing it. Continue the discussion until all of the points that we list below are mentioned. If participants fail to mention some of them, do so yourself.

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Key Points to Make

Clip 1: In the Shed

- The first and possibly the biggest mistake is the lack of initial teaching or training at the beginning of the scene. The character who rinsed the lettuce seemed uninformed about what he was doing, and he received very little instruction.
- The rag that he used is visibly dirty and unhygienic. Likewise, the bin where he stores the clean lettuce is dirty. Wiping it with a wet, dirty rag does not clean it adequately.
- The worker is coughing. He might be ill, and he should not be working with fresh produce.
- The worker drops some lettuce and then places it in the bin without rewashing, a clear contamination threat.

Clip 2: In the Truck

- Using the same vehicle to haul manure and fresh produce creates an unnecessary risk for microbial contamination.
- Storing gasoline, pesticides, and other chemicals near fresh produce, while not a major risk for microbial contamination, could create toxic contamination.
- The interaction of animals with fresh produce creates a contamination risk, even if the animal is a pet. Whenever possible, animals should be kept out of fields, as well as processing and transport locations.

Clip 3: In the Field

- The farmer says that the buckets are dirty and that they have been left out for a couple days. Bins should be stored under cover and kept clean to avoid exposure to animal wastes or other sources of contamination.
- The worker's coughing is intense. He may well contaminate the produce.
- The discussion about an open cut on the worker's hand that needs bandaging indicates a high potential for contamination.
- The lack of a convenient bathroom facility forces the worker to go near the field, which is unsanitary. There is no way for him to wash his hands afterward.

The Next Step

Part 4 is an activity based on a farm map that allows participants to identify potential microbial hazard spots on the farm.

**To obtain copies of the DVD that accompanies this publication, please contact the UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore at 1-800-226-1764 or order online at <http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu/>.*