

Small Farm Food Safety, Fresh Produce—Part 5: Your Farm’s Food Safety Plan¹

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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 5 consists of a discussion based on the questions found under the “Passing Along Best Practices” heading at the end of this document.

Time Required: 15 minutes

Materials for Trainer

Chalkboard or flip chart with markers to record participant ideas.

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 materials in this section to prepare yourself to facilitate the learning experience.

Materials for Participants

Printout of the questions found under the heading “Passing Along Best Practices” located at the end of this document.

Objectives

- **Application objective:** Participants will be prepared to train workers and associates on proper food safety.
- **Learning objective:** Participants will understand how to enhance food-safety training.

Procedure

1. Print and distribute to each participant one copy of “Passing Along Best Practices,” provided at the end of this document.
2. Have participants list the **five most important food-safety practices that new farm workers need to learn in order to avoid potential hazards of microbial contamination**. Stress that these practices should be specific to the participant’s farm—not general.
3. Ask each participant to share at least one of the practices he/she listed with the group.
4. As participants share their ideas, write them down on a flip chart.
5. If some of the key practices listed below are not mentioned, mention them yourself.
6. Next, have each participant list the **techniques or ideas that he/she should use to make sure that farm workers**

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are actually following the best farm practices mentioned in the first list.

7. Ask each participant to share at least one of the practices he/she listed with the group.
8. As participants share their ideas, write them down on a flip chart.
9. If some of the key practices listed below are not mentioned by participants, mention them yourself.

Key Practices

- Wash your hands!
- Take a bathroom break when necessary (but not in the field).
- Wear gloves when touching produce.
- Triple-wash leafy vegetables.
- Be aware of microbial sources, such as manure piles, and avoid cross-contamination.
- Keep animals (including pets) away from vegetables—especially after the produce has been washed.

Techniques for Making Sure Best Practices Are Used

- Post signs (but not too many) in strategic locations.
- Required a thorough training session upon first arrival.
- Review trainings within the year.
- Provide a manual of procedures for employees to consult and place it in a convenient location.

Passing Along Best Practices

Having a sound plan to deal with issues of food safety on your farm is very important. If you do not clearly convey the plan to those you work with, your farm can be at risk.

Exercise One: Imagine you have someone who is new or nearly new to your farm (e.g., a new employee, a family member, a volunteer, a friend, a neighbor, a relative). List the **five most important food-safety practices you need to teach this person to avoid potential hazards of microbial contamination on YOUR farm.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 4.
- 5.

Exercise Two: As anyone who has managed people knows, telling someone something and having them do it are two different things! **What techniques or ideas should you use to make sure that people working on YOUR farm are actually following your best farm practices?** List five techniques below (for example, putting up signs).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The Next Step

Part 6 is a resource guide with links to information on produce safety, commodity-specific food-safety guidelines, and consumer information.

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://www.ifasbooks.com>.