Food Safety and Small Growers

FMI Webinar
April 16, 2015
FMI Antitrust Statement

FMI believes strongly in competition. Our antitrust laws are the rules under which our competitive system operates. It
is FMI’s policy to comply in all respects with the antitrust laws.

Association meetings or workshops by their very nature bring competitors together. It is expected that all member
representatives involved in FMI activities, as well as FMI consultants and other participants, will be sensitive to the legal
issues and act in compliance with applicable antitrust and competition laws both at FMI meetings and FMI-sponsored
events.

Accordingly, it is necessary to avoid discussions of sensitive topics that can create antitrust concerns. Agreements to
fix prices, allocate markets, engage in product boycotts and to refuse to deal with third parties are illegal under the
antitrust laws. At any association meeting discussions of prices (including elements of prices such as allowances and
credit terms), quality ratings of suppliers, and discussions that may cause a competitor to cease purchasing from a
particular supplier, or selling to a particular customer, should be avoided. Also, there should be no discussion that might
be interpreted as a dividing up of territories.

An antitrust violation does not require proof of a formal agreement. A discussion of a sensitive topic, such as price,
followed by action by those involved or present at the discussion is enough to show a price fixing conspiracy. As a
result, those attending an association-sponsored meeting should remember the importance of avoiding not only
unlawful activities, but even the appearance of unlawful activity.

As a practical matter violations of these rules can have serious consequences for a company and its employees.
Antitrust investigations and litigation are lengthy, complex and disruptive. The Sherman Act is a criminal statute, and
may even result in penalties punishable by steep fines and imprisonment. The Justice Department, state attorneys
general and any person or company injured by a violation of the antitrust laws may bring an action for three times the
amount of the damages, plus attorney’s fees.

If you have any questions or concerns at this meeting, please bring them to the attention of FMI staff.
Why is food safety so critical at small farms?
Increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables
Outbreaks dilute consumer confidence
Need to protect our customers, our brand, and our suppliers
Bill Pool

• Provide an overview of what we’ve done over the past 9 years to help small, local growers understand why food safety is critical
• Some small growers may talk about exemption from FSMA...“Tester amendment”
• Regardless of size of farm....pathogens don’t differentiate small farm from large farm
Wegmans Requirements...

• We are requiring GAPs audits for all items as of September 2013...this was phased in
• Our approach is that one audit covers any item grown on their farm
• No need for multiple audits over the season; we recognize that multiple audits can be very expensive for our growers
Why did we get started...

- Concern about food safety and small growers led to working with Cornell University and the National GAPS Program
- Did first training sessions in **January 2005**
- Focus was on growers in NY state
- Wasn’t always received with open arms...
1998 FDA GAPs Guide

- Water
- Soil Amendments
- Worker Health
- Sanitary Facilities
- Field Sanitation
- Packing Facilities
- Transportation
- VOLUNTARY
The goal of this one-day workshop is to acquaint Wegmans growers with the importance of implementing Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in reducing microbial risks during the production and distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Food Safety Begins on the Farm: an Overview

Reducing Microbial Risks in Fresh Fruits and Vegetables with Good Agricultural Practices

Worker Education and Training: A Vital Component of GAPs

Manure and Compost

The Importance of Water Quality

Interactive Small Group Activities: Water Quality, Chlorination, and Hand-Washing

Sanitation in the Field and Packing House

Refreshment Break

Assessing Food Safety Risks on Your Farm

Developing a Crisis Management Plan
A Suggestion Became a Requirement

• In July 2006, Wegmans sent letter to our small, local growers informing them that GAPs would be required...no time frame!
• In Winter of 2007, we collaborated with Rutgers University and the USDA, and expanded training to growers in New Jersey
• GAPs required for certain items in 2008 *

* leafy greens, tomatoes, lopes, herbs, green onions
Wegmans GAPs Produce Safety Workshop  
Burlington County Cooperative Extension Office  
2 Academy Drive, Westampton, NJ 08060  
**March 30, 2007**  
8:30AM – 2:00PM

Co-sponsored by: Wegmans Food Markets, Rutgers University, New Jersey Department of Agriculture  
Cornell University, United States Department of Agriculture

**Registration and coffee**

**Welcome and introductions**  
Why we are here and why is it important?  
Dave Corsi, **Wegmans Food Markets**

**Food Safety: A Supermarket Perspective**  
Bill Pool  
Wegmans Food Markets

**Pathogens and Produce: What You Should Know**  
Don Schaffner  
*Rutgers University* Extension Specialist

**Break**

**GAPs for the Farm and Packinghouse**  
Bob Gravani, Director  
*National GAPs Program at Cornell University*

**Audit Perspectives from the USDA**  
Ken Petersen, Staff Assistant GAP & GHP Program  
*USDA*, Washington, DC

**Lunch**  
Provided by Wegmans Food Markets

**Preparing for a 3rd Party Audit**  
Wes Kline, Rutgers University Extension Specialist  
Larry Hardwick, **NJ Department of Agriculture**

**Summary and Discussion**
Additional Topics

2009

Available Funding and Common Audit Problems
Bill Lyons and Marty Farrell
Farm Products Division, New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

Grower Perspective on Writing a Farm Food Safety Plan
Brian Reeves, Reeves Farms, Baldwinsville, NY

Writing your Farm Food Safety Plan Workshop
Small work groups with Betsy Bihn

2010

Food Defense and Crisis Management; What You Need to Know
Bob Gravani, National GAPs Program, Cornell University
Since then...

- In 2011, we worked with Penn State
- The **University of Massachusetts** and MA Dept. of Agriculture in December 2012
- The University of Maryland and MD Dept. of Agriculture...local growers at Columbia 2013
- Virginia Tech for GAPs meeting in March 2013
And more...

- Sponsored GAPs session Virginia with folks from **Virginia Tech** in February 2015....had 40 growers present
- Session with **University of Maryland** in March 2015, along with Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Completes linkages with land-grant schools in our market areas
A review of topics....

• Importance of Water Quality... Manure/Compost... Personal Health and Hygiene
• How to write a farm food safety plan...
• Review of USDA GAPs audit findings...
• Get a grower to talk about GAPs...
• Available funding to help cover audit costs under USDA block grants to states
Retailer as conduit....
Taught by VA Tech
Open to anyone
Produce Wholesaler, but not a supplier to Wegmans
We let our growers know about it
Wegmans Role

• We **facilitate** the meetings, and talk about the impact of outbreaks from our perspective
• Provide meeting site and food
• Provide training materials and handouts
• Have reimbursed growers towards the cost of their audits...increased reimbursement to **$500** for 2014 and I expect we will continue
Our Collaborators

• **Robert Gravani**, Ph.D., Director of the National GAPs Program at Cornell University

• **Wesley Kline**, Ph.D., Agricultural Agent with Rutgers University Cooperative Extension

• **Ken Petersen**, Head, Audit Programs Section Specialty Crops Inspection Division, USDA
Cornell University

• Bob Gravani, Ph.D.
• The National GAPs program at Cornell
• The Produce Safety Alliance
• Education that is available for growers
GAPs Activities at Cornell

- 1998 First USDA grant to address GAPs in the NE
- 1999 National GAPS program first funded
- Development of a series of education materials
- Expansion of National GAPs program
- 2010 Produce Safety Alliance created
A Comprehensive Food Safety Program

- Grower’s Guide
- GAPs Pamphlet
- Farm Assessment
- Resource Manual
- Exhibit & Poster
- Educational materials for worker training
- GAPsNET: www.gaps.cornell.edu
- GAPS Online Produce Safety Course
Welcome to the GAPsNET
Good Agricultural Practices Network for Education and Training
Module One: Welcome
Module Two: Shared Responsibility in Food Safety
Module Three: Good Agricultural Practices
  3.1.0 Worker Training, Hygiene, and Health
  3.2.0 Water Use
  3.3.0 Postharvest Water Use
  3.4.0 Soil Amendments
  3.5.0 Cleaning and Sanitation
  3.6.0 Traceback and Recall
  3.7.0 Crisis Management
  3.8.0 Other Important Practices
Module Four: Implementing Change
  4.1.0 Education and Training in Food Safety
  4.2.0 Building the Plan
Module Five: Course Conclusion
Educational Materials for Workers

• Photonovel series
• Coloring Book
• Magnets
• Fruits, Vegetables, and Food Safety: Health and Hygiene on the Farm
• Field Hygiene Poster Series
One Educational Approach

POR FAVOR, DEPÓSITÉ EL PAPEL HIGIÉNICO USADO DENTRO DEL INODORO

EL PAPEL HIGIÉNICO NO ATORA LOS INODOROS

TOILET PAPER WILL NOT OBSTRUCT TOILETS

PLEASE PUT USED TOILET PAPER IN THE TOILET

LÁVESE LOS MANOS FRECUENTEMENTE

ANTEY DESPUÉS DE USAR EL BAÑO, COMER, BEBER, O FUMAR

BEFORE AND AFTER USING THE TOILET, EATING, DRINKING, OR SMOKING

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN!

USE TOILET FACILITIES IN FIELD

YES SI

NO NO

USE LOS BAÑOS DISPONIBLE EN EL CAMPO
• Cooperative agreement between Cornell University, FDA, and USDA
• Outreach and Education Program
• PSA Established on October 1, 2010
Target Audiences

• Fresh produce growers, packers, and grower cooperatives with special emphasis on small and very small scale farms and packinghouses
  – Not to the exclusion of any farmer
• Regulatory personnel
• All others interested in produce food safety, GAPs, and co-management
Primary Goals

• Education and outreach to improve understanding and implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and co-management strategies

• Developing a standardized education and training curriculum to assist with the implementation of FDA's produce safety regulation
Curriculum Development Process

- 10 WCs, 72 calls
- 178 Unique WC Members
- 549 Total WC Members
- 8 Nationwide grower focus groups

Identify GAPs Challenges
Complete: May 2012

Set Goals
Complete: June 2012

Develop Learning Objectives
Complete: Dec 2012

Create Content

Finalized: Dec, 2014
Produce Safety Alliance Curriculum

Seven hours of dedicated instruction including:
1. Introduction to Produce Safety
2. Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training
3. Agricultural Water
4. Soil Amendments
5. Wildlife, Domestic Animals, and Land Use
6. Post-Harvest Handling and Sanitation
7. How to Develop a Farm Food Safety Plan

*Completion of course results in certificate from Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) to meet regulatory requirement for training
Visit Our Website
http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu
Rutgers Cooperative Extension

- Wesley Kline, Ph.D. and Meredith Melendez
- Role of extension in grower education
- Partnership with NJ Department of Agriculture and the NJ Vegetable Growers Association
Food Safety Partnership

Inform growers and the industry on food safety principals

Presentations made at grower meetings

Articles written for newsletters


Displays manned at trade shows
History of Program

• A self audit checklist was developed for growers to assess their own operations (March, 2000)

• NJDA agreed to set up a third party food safety audit program to certify New Jersey growers and shippers

• NJDA and Rutgers Cooperative Extension staff compiled a third party audit checklist that was ready for the 2000 growing season.

• In 2002 the program started offering third party audits to growers, shippers and suppliers
Areas Included in the Self Audit

- Water
- Manure
- Worker Health and Hygiene
- Field Sanitation
- Packing Facility Practices
- Transportation
- Traceback
• Training sessions are usually two to six hours
  – Topics
    • Food Safety: A Supermarket Perspective
    • Pathogens and Produce: What You Should Know
    • Good Agricultural Practices in the Farm Field
    • Postharvest Handling and Using Sanitizers to Improve Food Safety
    • Problems Observed During Mock Third Party Audits
    • Preparing for a 3rd Party Audit
    • Preparing for a Food Safety Recall
    • Food Safety Modernization Act
Developing a Plan for Third-Party Audits

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)

RUTGERS
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

Good Agricultural Practices & Food Safety-
How to Prepare for a 3rd Party Audit
ANDREW LEVARI, JR

has successfully completed a 2 hour training session held on January 17, 2008 at the 2008 Atlantic Coast Agriculture Conference and Trade Show, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

This training was sponsored by The New Jersey Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station and Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

Wesley L. Kline, Ph.D.
New Jersey GAPs Coordinator and Trainer

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)

Forms for Developing a Plan for Third-Party Audits

Compiled by: Wesley L. Kline, Ph.D.
County Agricultural Agent
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Cumberland County, New Jersey
May 2008
1999-2015 training sessions

• Food Safety Training
  – 2,818

• Third Party Audit Training
  – 1,558

• Number of Events
  – 68

• Third Party Mock Audits
  – 105
Food Safety and Food Borne Illnesses
Wesley Kline, Ph.D., Cumberland County Agricultural Agent

Growers and produce organizations continue to be asked about their food safety plans and whether they have a third party auditor to evaluate their operations. This website provides information that will help growers develop their food safety plan and prepare for those audits. There is a frequently asked question section which allows individuals to see the questions already asked and post a question to the website. These questions will be answered directly with the person posting it and be added to questions asked on the website.

The following information gives a general overview about the seriousness of the problem and why there are more problems today.

How serious is the problem?

Initially outbreaks were traced to poultry, beef and fish, but increasingly fresh produce is recognized as a source. In the 1970’s there were two outbreaks/year with an average of 21 cases in each outbreak. This increased in the 1990’s to 16 outbreaks/year averaging 43 cases per outbreak.
• Produce Safety Task Force Formed
  – NJDA
  – NJAES
  – NJ Department of Health
  – NJ Processors Association
  – NJ Grocers Association
  – NJ Restaurant Association
  – Grower representatives
• Weekly question and answer column
• Monthly question and answer column
• Advanced Food Safety Workshop
Remember The First Step in Food Safety is Common Sense

Food Safety Begins on the Farm

Food Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility
Ken Petersen
Head, Audit Programs Section
Specialty Crops Inspection Division
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
Washington DC
USDA GAP&GHP Program

• Voluntary, User Fee funded program
• Audits conducted by either federal or state department of agriculture employees trained and licensed to perform audits
• Nationwide program, auditors located in 36 states; over 4,000 audits conducted in FY12
• Audits conducted in 48 states, Canada, Chile
USDA GAP&GHP Program

- Auditors are selected from existing pool of fruit and vegetable inspectors, thus they “know” fruit and vegetables
- Must undergo rigorous training and evaluation program
USDA GAP&GHP Program

• All audits are based on FDA Guidance Documents and industry best practices.

• Audit Types
  – Generic GAP&GHP
  – Harmonized GAP
  – Commodity Specific GAPs (tomato, leafy greens, mushrooms, cantaloupes)
USDA GAP&GHP Program

• Preparing for an audit
  – Must have developed and implemented a written food safety plan
  – Refer to specific audit checklist for required documentation
  – Perform a self audit
  – Audits need to be conducted while active harvesting activities are being performed
USDA GAP&GHP Program

• To schedule an audit:
  – Call local Inspection Office
  – Visit the USDA website for contact information
    • www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp
Key Points

• Need to protect our brand, our customers and our suppliers

• **Collaborations/partnerships** are critical to success

• Win-Win-Win....growers can access to markets and customers get freshest product possible
• We don’t charge growers for the training; we will pay expenses associated with training

• We schedule sessions in off-seasons to encourage participation

• Takes effort and commitment...won’t always be welcomed!

• A GAPs audit does **not** guarantee safety...but it does show if the grower has the right things in place...
Dave Corsi....Summary & Close

• Explains why small growers should not be excluded from following common food safety practices
• You’re not alone...
• A journey. It will take an investment of time to establish this requirement
• Thanks.......
Any Questions??

Contact information

• Bill Pool  Bill.Pool@Wegmans.com
• Bob Gravani  RBG2@Cornell.edu
• Wes Kline  WKline@AESOP.Rutgers.edu
• Ken Petersen  Ken.Petersen@ams.usda.gov
Resources to get started...

• Cooperative Extension offices and agents
• Land-grant universities...every state has one
• National GAPs Program  [www.gaps.cornell.edu](http://www.gaps.cornell.edu)
• USDA GAPs Program  [www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp)
• State Departments of Agriculture
• Produce Safety Alliance (PSA)  [www.producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu](http://www.producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu)