

Fresh Produce Safety *update*

Good Agricultural Practices

What are Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)?

Good agricultural practices (GAPs) are the basic environmental and operational conditions necessary for the production of safe, wholesome fruits and vegetables. The purpose of GAPs is to give logical guidance in implementing best management practices that will help to reduce the risks of microbial contamination of fruits and vegetables. Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) are not regulated or required by any governmental agency. They are intended as guidance to help growers establish safe practices. In some cases, being GAP-certified may protect a grower against some liability. Implementation and/or certification in GAPs may sometimes be required by some individual buyers who want to be able to guarantee to customers that their produce is safely supplied.

Four Basic Steps in GAPs Education (*All of these resources can be found on NC MarketReady Fresh Produce Safety Website as well as directly*):

1. Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/ProduceandPlanProducts/ucm064574.htm>)
2. Good Agriculture Practices: A Self-Audit for Grower and Handlers (<http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/filelibrary/5453/4362.pdf>)
3. N.C. MarketReady Fresh Produce Safety -Field To Family Tiered-Educational Program—Contact your local NC Cooperative Extension Office or Diane Ducharme for details. Current trainings can be found at: <http://ncsu.edu/enterprises/ncfreshproducesafety> under Trainings & Events.
4. Good Agricultural Practices – Fresh Produce Safety Plan for Field Practices—a template document, developed by N.C. State, provides a framework for growers to develop their own food safety plans (<http://ncsu.edu/enterprises/ncfreshproducesafety/good-agricultural-practices-gaps/audits-plans/food-safety-plans/>)

GAPs Resources

- Mock Third-Party Audit for GAPs Certification - an 8-minute slideshow outlining GAPs certification and an actual audit performed by NCDA & CS, Marketing Division (<http://ncsu.edu/enterprises/ncfreshproducesafety/2010/05/11/mock-third-party-audit-for-gaps-certification/>)
- Fresh Produce Safety Liability Management (http://ncsu.edu/enterprises/ncfreshproducesafety/?page_id=2394)
- Farm to Retail Produce Traceability Pilot (http://ncsu.edu/enterprises/ncfreshproducesafety/?page_id=2408)
- GAPs –Trained Growers Directory (<http://www.ncmarketready.org/grower-search.php>)
- NC Fresh Produce Safety Task Force
- Diane's Blog and more!



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NC MARKETREADY™
Fresh Produce Safety – Field to Family

A Program of NC Cooperative Extension
Fresh Produce Safety Website

<http://www.ncfreshproducesafety.org>

For more information contact:
Diane Ducharme
N.C. MarketReady
N. C. Research Campus
600 Laureate Way
Kannapolis, NC 28081
Diane_Ducharme@ncsu.edu
704-250-5402