



# GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

A Plain Language Guide from the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project



## THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU ANSWER:

- What are GAPs and why are they important?
- What should I expect during the audit process?
- How do I develop a Food Safety Plan?
- How do I navigate the USDA's GAP & GHP Audit Verification Checklist?

# NEW ENTRY SUSTAINABLE FARMING PROJECT

Authored by Julia Simons  
With help from Meredith Epstein  
Reviewed by Jennifer Hashley, NESFP Director  
[www.nesfp.org](http://www.nesfp.org)

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## Boston Office:

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project  
Agriculture, Food and Environment Program  
Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition and Science Policy  
Tufts University  
75 Kneeland Street  
Boston, MA 02111  
(617) 636-3793

## Lowell Office:

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project  
155 Merrimack Street, 3rd Floor  
Lowell, MA 01852  
(978) 654-6745

For additional information regarding this document, please email: [nesfp@tufts.edu](mailto:nesfp@tufts.edu), or call: (978) 654-6745. This document is available in electronic format or as a printed copy. The latter may be obtained by contacting NESFP at the above locations. Please contact New Entry for permission to use any or all of this document for educational purposes.

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# CONTENTS

Purpose of this Guide .....	2
Background: What Are GAPs and Why Are They Important? .....	3
The GAP Audit Process .....	4
The Food Safety Plan .....	7
GAP and GHP Audit Verification Checklist .....	8
Survey .....	16
Glossary .....	17
Resources .....	18
Appendix A: USDA GAP & GHP Audit Verification Checklist .....	20
Appendix B: The Henderson Farm Grower Food Safety Manual .....	21



# PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

## ***Who should read this guide?***

This guide is written for people who would like to increase food safety on their farms by following Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), and even become GAP certified by the USDA. This guide will help you understand the benefits of GAP certification, as well as what the process looks like before, during, and after the audit. It explains how to prepare for the Audit Verification Checklist and provides numerous resources for further reading and preparation.

*You will benefit from this guide if you:*

- Are a fruit and/or vegetable farmer.
- Would like to make your food safer to eat.
- Would like to learn more about how GAP certification can be beneficial for you.
- A produce buyer requires you to have GAP certification.

It may be helpful for you to use this workbook with someone who can guide you to more farming information, such as an experienced farmer, USDA employee, or other service provider.

## ***What is Plain Language?***

This guide is presented in a format called **Plain Language**. Plain Language provides clear, simple, and accessible text for readers in order to reduce misunderstandings, errors, complaints, enquiries, and lack of comprehension. It also helps guide you through action steps to do what you learn and gives examples of other people practicing the information. We present this guide in Plain Language in order to make the topic accessible to everyone.

# BACKGROUND

## What are “GAPs” and why are they so important?

**What are “GAPs”?** In agriculture, “GAPs” or “GAP” stands for Good Agricultural Practices. When a farmer follows Good Agricultural Practices, he or she is taking steps to lower the risk of contaminating produce with dangerous pathogens on the farm.

**What are “GHPs”?** “GHPs” or “GHP” stands for Good Handling Practices. Good Handling Practices are similar to Good Agricultural Practices, but they are food safety steps that are taken after harvesting and field packing, such as at a House Packing Facility or a Wholesale Distribution Center or Terminal Warehouse.

Taking these food safety steps is extremely important to keep a farm business operating successfully. In the last several years, many people have gotten sick from eating fruits, vegetables, and meat contaminated with dangerous pathogens. You may have heard of some of these pathogens, such as Salmonella, E. coli, and Listeria. These bacteria are not generally found in fresh produce, but they can find their way to fresh produce via contaminated animals, humans, or water. These microbes are invisible to the human eye, but they can cause people to become very sick and occasionally die. Young and old people, as well as those with weak immune systems, are the most likely to be seriously hurt by these pathogens. Contamination can occur at any point in the food system: during growing, harvesting, washing, or marketing, so it is important to follow Good Agricultural Practices at all times when handling produce.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has developed a voluntary program where farmers can be audited (or visited on the farm by inspectors) to ensure that they are following Good Agricultural Practices. Many wholesale and foodservice buyers now require that farmers become “GAP certified,” or undergo these third-party audits, as an assurance that they take steps to reduce the risk of pathogen contamination. Thus, the GAP program is not required by the government, but it may be required if you wish to sell to larger purchasers.

Following GAPs does not absolutely guarantee that food is free of pathogens. However, it does verify that a farmer has taken specific steps to make his or her food safer to eat, and it greatly lowers the chance of producing and selling food that has been contaminated. Therefore, being aware of food safety issues and creating a food safety program for a farm are important steps for all operations that produce fresh fruits and vegetables to take – not only those that wish to become GAP certified.

# THE GAP AUDIT PROCESS

**Before explaining how to enhance food safety on your farm, this guide will cover what to expect during the GAP audit process.**

Farms that wish to be GAP certified must be audited each year to keep their certification current. The first thing you must do to begin the audit process is implement your Food Safety Plan, which is a written document that explains how you plan to keep the food on your farm free of contaminants. It is important to do this at the beginning of the growing season, because you will then have time to make any necessary changes to your Plan, and you will have time to create and collect records that prove you are following your Plan. Also, you will likely be too busy with your operation in the middle of a growing season to successfully implement a food safety program.

## Self-Auditing

It is a good idea to conduct a self-audit before scheduling an official USDA audit. This self-audit will allow you to understand the strengths and weaknesses in your Food Safety Plan, and it will provide you with an opportunity to make adjustments to your Plan before undergoing the official audit. You should use the official USDA GAP & GHP audit checklist to perform the self-audit. It is available at the end of this guide.

## Scheduling an Audit

To schedule an audit, contact the local USDA inspection office at least two weeks before you would like the audit to occur. You should schedule your audit to occur when your earliest crops are being harvested. You will have to schedule an audit every year to maintain certification. A list of USDA inspection offices can be found on the USDA GAP & GHP website ([www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/GAPGHPAuditVerificationProgram](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/GAPGHPAuditVerificationProgram)) or by calling the Fresh Products Branch at 800-560-7956, Extension 5. When scheduling the audit, be prepared to provide a point of contact, the contact's information, address of the audit site, and other necessary information.

Before the audit is conducted, you must sign a Participation Agreement form, which the auditor will give to you. The form explains the expectations of the farm and of the auditor in performing the GAP audit. It must be signed by a farm manager and given to the auditor before the audit can begin.

The initial audit is then conducted, and during this time the auditor determines whether the farm complies with USDA requirements, and whether the farm can be GAP certified. The audit consists of reviewing documents and records, interviewing employees, and observing the operation to verify compliance with the farm's Food Safety Plan and USDA's GAP requirements.



If the initial audit does not meet the USDA GAP program requirements, a follow-up audit is conducted to give the farm a second chance at passing the audit. If this occurs, the auditor will create a list of actions the farm must take before meeting program requirements, and the farm must address these actions before the follow-up audit can occur.

### After the Audit

After a successful audit, unannounced “verification visits” are conducted at some point during the growing season to verify that a farm is continuing to follow its food safety plan, fill out relevant documentation, and meet USDA’s GAP program requirements. These verification visits are not announced, so a farm will not know when to expect an auditor to arrive. The number of unannounced verification visits depends on the number of crops grown and the length of time each season that an operation is in production. In general, the maximum number of unannounced verification visits per year is two, and this is for farms that are operating for 90 days or more each year. However, the USDA can conduct more than two unannounced verification visits if they find it necessary to do so.

### Crops Covered by the Audit

On a diversified farm that grows many different types of fruits and vegetables, a single audit can cover all crops, as long as:

1. All crops grown throughout the year are listed on the initial audit, and the food safety plan discusses any potential risks and food safety strategies associated with each of the crops. No crops can be added later in the season.
2. The crops are all harvested during or after the initial audit is conducted. Crops that were harvested before the initial audit occurred are not covered in the GAP certification.
3. More unannounced visits might be involved if the different crops span a long growing season. Extra visits would make it possible to see all crops during production and harvest stages.

## Sections of the Audit

There are seven sections of the GAP/GHP audit, and each section covers a different part of the supply chain. **When a farm is audited, it does not need to be audited for all seven sections. Instead, it can choose which sections it would like to have audited.** The sections of the audit are:

- General Questions
- Part 1 – Farm Review
- Part 2 – Field Harvest & Field Packing Activities
- Part 3 – House Packing Facility
- Part 4 – Storage and Transportation
- Part 5 – (No Longer Used)
- Part 6 – Wholesale Distribution Center/Terminal Warehouse
- Part 7 – Preventative Food Defense Procedures

The General Questions are required for every audit (except those that only wish to be audited for Part 7 Food Defense). Most small farms will choose to be audited for Part 1 Farm Review, Part 2 Field Harvest & Field Packing Activities, Part 3 House Packing Facility, and Part 4 Storage and Transportation, in addition to the General Questions. Part 6 is intended for wholesale centers, and Part 7 addresses Food Defense against intentional contamination of the food supply by groups such as terrorists.

## Passing or Failing

Within each section of the audit several questions are asked, and each question is assigned a point value of 5, 10, or 15 points. The total points for each section range from 180 to 410. **In order to pass the audit, you must have a minimum passing score of 80% for each section audited.** It is important to remember that you do not need to comply with every question in the audit; instead, you need a minimum score of 80% for each section audited to pass. However, there are five conditions that will automatically cause you to fail the audit:

1. An immediate food safety risk is present that causes a product to become contaminated
2. Presence or evidence of rodents, or an excessive amount of insects or other pests in the produce
3. Employee practices that jeopardize safety of the produce
4. Falsifying your recordkeeping
5. Answering General Questions 1 or 2 “no”
  - General Question 1 is: “A documented food safety program that incorporates GAP and/or GHP has been implemented.” Therefore, you need to write a food safety plan and carry it out.
  - General Question 2 is: “The operation has designated someone to implement and oversee an established food safety program,” and it requires you to name that individual. Therefore, you need to choose someone to be in charge of food safety on your farm.



# THE FOOD SAFETY PLAN

**To be prepared for an audit, you must have already developed a Food Safety Plan. Without a Food Safety Plan, you cannot become GAP certified.**

## What is a Food Safety Plan, and what does it include?

Essentially, a Food Safety Plan is a written document that you have created specific to your farm, which covers all steps of the food production process on your farm and evaluates all potential sources of food contamination. It should include explanations of how you reduce the risks of contamination for all parts of your operation. It should also explain what steps you will take if you suspect or know that certain products on your farm have been exposed to pathogens. The Food Safety Plan must include GAP certification program requirements, which are explained below. Much of the GAP audit will be based on what you have written in your food safety plan. You are audited on how well you manage food safety on your farm, according to your Food Safety Plan.



## Key items to consider include:

- Make the food safety plan specific to your operation
- Develop “Standard Operating Procedures,” which are essentially what you will incorporate into your normal, everyday activities to make them more food safe
- Choose one person on your farm to be in charge of food safety
- Once you have created a food safety plan, you must follow it
- It is important to keep records of activities that promote safe, clean produce. The GAP Audit checklist explains what documentation and records are necessary, although you may decide that you would like to have more than the required documentation for your operation. The GAP Audit checklist, along with examples of records and documentation, are available at the end of this guide. You can model your documents off of the ones provided, but make them specific to your farm.
- When a food safety issue arises on your farm, make sure to keep records of actions that you took to correct the issue

Examples of food safety plans are also available at the end of this guide. You can model your food safety plan on the ones provided, but make sure it is specific to your farm.

# GAP AND GHP AUDIT VERIFICATION CHECKLIST

This section of the guide will describe best management practices for the first five sections of the GAP audit. However, if you wish to become GAP certified, it is extremely important that you read through the official USDA GAP & GHP Audit Verification Checklist to make sure that you can achieve an 80% passing rate on the questions included in each section of the audit that you wish to undergo. Remember that you do not need to be audited on all sections of the GAP program, so you only need to read the sections of the Audit Verification Checklist on which you wish to be audited.

In addition, the Audit Verification Checklist includes a “Doc” column, which tells you when a document will be required that will be requested and reviewed by the auditor. This will be very important for you to note when developing your Food Safety Plan.

In the “Doc” column:

- D** stands for **documentation**, meaning that a document is necessary to show that you have answered the question
- R** stands for **record**, meaning that you must keep a record to show that an action was completed
- P** stands for **policy**, meaning that a policy must be documented in your Food Safety Plan to show that you are complying with the requirement.

Examples of many of the documents you need are included at the end of this guide. You may model your documents off of the ones included in this guide, but you should make sure that they have been adapted to the specific situations on your farm.





## General Questions

The General Questions are required for every audit (except those only addressing Part 7 Food Defense). They cover broad food safety issues, and in order to pass the GAP audit, you must meet the requirements of the General Questions section. Questions in this section cover:

- **Food Safety Program:** Develop a Food Safety Plan and appoint one person to implement and oversee the farm's food safety program.
- **Traceability:** Know where each product on your farm was received from, if you bring in products from other locations, and where each product on your farm was sold. This involves keeping daily records of where on the farm harvested produce was grown, when produce was harvested, when it was packed, and where each product ended up, such as at a specific farmers' market, in a CSA box, in a specific restaurant, or in a specific wholesale account.
- **Recall program:** Be able to recall a product once it has left the farm's control. In the GAP audit, you are required to conduct a "mock recall," which is an exercise used to determine whether you could actually recall a product if necessary. You need documented evidence of at least one mock recall before the audit, and documents must include the customers contacted, the amount of product that could be successfully recalled, and the amount of product that could not be recalled.
- **Worker health and hygiene:**
  - Provide training to all employees on food safety and sanitation.
  - Provide plenty of drinkable water to all workers.
  - Make sure employees wash their hands before beginning or returning to work.
  - Provide clean, well-stocked toilet/restroom/field sanitation facilities with handwashing stations for workers.
  - Keep smoking and eating areas away from work areas.
  - Keep sick or injured employees away from fresh produce. Have workers clean and cover up wounds before handling produce.
  - Develop policies around handling produce that has come in contact with bodily fluids. This produce should absolutely not be sold to customers.

## Part I – Farm Review

This section addresses questions about crop production areas, domestic and wild animals, and water and soil amendments.

- **Water use:** It is very important to know the quality of the water being applied to crops. This information, along with knowledge about the type of irrigation method and the crop being irrigated, allows you to understand the risk of pathogen contamination from your water source. Water standards vary by state, but acceptable levels of pathogens for irrigation in Massachusetts are:
  - **Fecal Coliform** – 200 CFU/100 ml
  - **E. coli** – Geometric mean of 5 samples <126 CLF/100 ml with no sample over 235 CFU/100 ml. For non foliar contact (if water is not touching the leaves), the acceptable level of E. coli is <576 CFU/100 ml.

You are required to test your water quality, with different testing frequencies depending on your water source. Required testing frequencies are as follows:

- **Municipal water:** Obtain results once a year from the local water authority.
- **Well water:** Test water once during the growing season, and if fecal coliforms are detected, treat well with a sanitizer and retest.
- **Surface water:** Test water three times during growing season – once at planting, once at peak use, and once at harvest.

If you find high levels of pathogens in your water source, you should change water sources or reduce pathogen levels in your water by finding ways to reduce harmful inputs to your water source (such as manure).

- **Sewage treatment:** Farm and municipal sewage treatment systems should not contaminate farm fields.
- **Animals/Wildlife/Livestock:** Animal feces are a common source of harmful pathogens that can make people sick when they wind up in our food. Therefore, it is important to keep animals away from areas where food is being grown.
  - Keep crop production areas completely separated from livestock production areas.
  - Keep manure storage areas well contained, so that the manure cannot contaminate crops.
  - Keep livestock away from the water source for crops.
  - Take steps to keep wild and domestic animals away from crop production areas, and monitor these areas for signs of animals. For example, do not allow pets to enter crop production fields, and put up fences to prevent deer from entering fields.

- **Manure and Biosolids:** Many people use manure and municipal biosolids (treated sludge from municipal wastewater treatment plants) as fertilizer on their fields. Preventative measures should be taken when using these products to guarantee their safety.
  - If applying any raw manure to fields, make sure it is applied at least 2 weeks before planting, and at least 120 days before harvest.
  - If applying composted manure and/or treated biosolids to fields, make sure they have been properly composted and treated to lower pathogen levels. Store composted manure and treated biosolids in a contained area to avoid recontamination. Composting is a process that breaks down organic matter and kills harmful pathogens. In order for composting to be successful at killing pathogens, the temperature of the manure pile must be brought up to 140-150°F and held there for a number of days. Generally, active composting requires approximately 10-12 weeks altogether, during which time the manure pile must be turned five times to ensure uniform mixing and proper aeration.
- **Soils:**
  - Know the history of the land where you are farming
  - If previous uses of the land may have provided opportunities for pathogen contamination (such as if the area used to be a dairy farm), test the soil for contaminants and take steps to minimize risk of contamination.
  - If flooding occurs, test the area that was flooded for contamination by pathogens.



## Part 2 – Field Harvest and Field Packing Activities

This section addresses the safety of your operation while harvesting and packing produce in the fields.

- **Field Sanitation and Hygiene:**
  - Make toilet and handwashing facilities available for all workers.
  - Locate toilet facilities in areas that are easily accessible for transporting and servicing, and that are also far enough away from production fields to avoid contamination in case of a spill.
  - Make sure you have a plan in case a field toilet has a spill or a leak.
- **Field Harvesting and Transportation:**
  - Clean and sanitize field harvesting containers and hand harvesting equipment (knives, pruners, machetes) routinely. Throw out or fix broken containers and harvesting equipment. During the harvest season, only use harvesting containers for harvesting – not for any other use.
  - If any harvesting equipment contains lightbulbs or glass, protect those parts so they do not contaminate produce if they break. If any glass or plastic does break in the field, make sure you have a written plan for how to isolate and clean up the area. During harvest, remove any foreign objects such as glass, metal, rocks, or other dangerous items.
  - Have a plan for safely isolating and disposing of products that are contaminated by chemicals, petroleum, pesticides, or other harmful items.
  - Only use drinkable water on harvested products.
  - Remove excessive dirt and mud from harvested products and harvesting containers.
  - Keep equipment used to transport harvested products from the field to storage areas or processing plants clean and in good repair. Keep harvested products covered when being transported from field to storage areas or processing plants.





### Part 3 – House Packing Facility

This section covers the washing and packing area on your farm, which is where products are brought for cleaning and packaging for sale.

- **Receiving:** Before packing, products should be properly transported and stored to protect against possible contamination. This includes keeping products covered and separated from sources of contaminants.
- **Washing/Packing Line:**
  - All water used in cooling and washing products should be drinkable. Wash water cannot come from surface waters, such as ponds or rivers. Processing water can be treated with chlorine or a similar chemical substance to reduce microbial contamination. If you do this, regularly monitor and record levels of antimicrobial chemicals to make sure they are maintained appropriately.
  - When dunking produce in wash water, wash water temperatures should generally be kept no more than 10° F cooler than produce temperatures to keep pathogens from contaminating the produce. However, if rinsing produce with moving water this recommendation does not need to be followed.
  - Clean food-contact and water-contact surfaces, such as tabletops and wash tanks, regularly.
  - Make sure that any ice used for cooling the produce is made, stored, and shipped in sanitary conditions.
- **Packing House Worker Sanitation:**
  - Areas where employees eat and take breaks should be clean and kept separate from the packing area
  - Employees and visitors should keep their hair contained in hairnets and take off jewelry while in the packing area. Jewelry that cannot be removed (such as wedding rings) can be covered with tape.

- **Packinghouse General Housekeeping:**
  - Any lubricants used on packing equipment and machinery must be food grade approved. Any chemicals not approved for food use must be kept away from the packing area.
  - Keep the packing area and all things within it organized, clean, and free of litter and standing water. Make sure that trash cans in the packing area are closed with lids.
  - Enclose the packing area. Walls, floors, and ceilings should be well maintained and free of major cracks.
  - If any glass materials are in the packing area, make sure they are contained in case of breakage.
  - Make sure that any wastewater spillage will not contaminate the area where you handle food. This can be done through barriers, drains, or distance.
  - Keep animals and pests out of packing and storage areas.
  - Develop a plan for what to do if product is spilled or falls on the floor.



#### **Part 4 – Storage and Transportation**

This section provides recommendations for controlling pests, controlling temperature, and appropriately storing and transporting your product after washing and packing.

- **Product, Containers & Pallets:**
  - Keep the area where you store your product clean, and clean and seal your packing containers to protect them from contamination by birds, rodents, and other pests.
  - Store non-food grade substances away from your product.
  - Keep any mechanical equipment used during the storage process clean and well maintained.
- **Pest Control:**
  - Keep animals and pests out of storage facilities.
  - Walls, floor, and ceilings should be well maintained and free of major cracks.



- **Ice:**
  - Use drinkable water for cooling/ice during storage and transportation
  - Make sure the facilities making, storing, and transporting ice for your operation have been sanitized.
- **Storage/Temperature Control:**
  - Keep the storage facility clean and organized.
  - Make sure your refrigeration system works properly.
- **Transportation/Loading:**
  - All trucks and trailers that contain your product should be clean and free of bad odors. Only load your products with other products that are free of contaminants.
  - Keep products at appropriate temperatures to ensure quality and safety are maintained.



# SURVEY

Thank you for your interest in this plain language guide. If you could take a few minutes to fill out a four question survey, please go to: [\[INSERT URL HERE\]](#).

1) How would you describe your background? Please circle at least one.

- Farmer
- Home Gardener
- Educator or Researcher
- Rancher
- Non-Profit Professional
- Government Agent
- Other

2) How useful was this guide? Please check one.

- Not Useful      Most Useful

3) Where did you learn about this guide? Please circle at least one.

- Friend
- Internet
- Co-Worker
- New Entry Staff
- Other

4) How will you use the information in this guide? Please write 2 or 3 action items.

Additional comments, corrections, or suggestions.

Please write to us with additional comments, suggestions, corrections, or to sign up for the New Entry newsletter.

Survey results can be sent to:

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project  
155 Merrimack Street, 3rd Floor  
Lowell, MA 01852



# GLOSSARY

**Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs):** These are steps that a farmer can take to lower the risk of contaminating produce with dangerous pathogens on the farm.

**Good Handling Practices (GHPs):** These are food safety steps that are taken after harvesting and field packing, such as at a House Packing Facility or a Wholesale Distribution Center or Terminal Warehouse

**GAP Certified:** Farmers who are GAP certified have undergone a voluntary third-party audit by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and passed with a minimum score of 80%. This process is not mandatory by the government, but many wholesale and foodservice buyers now require that the farmers they source from be GAP certified.

**Food Safety Plan:** A written document that you have created specific to your farm, which covers all steps of the food production process on your farm and evaluates all potential sources of food contamination. It should include explanations of how you reduce the risks of contamination for all parts of your operation. It should also explain what steps you will take if you suspect or know that certain products on your farm have been exposed to pathogens.

**Fecal Coliform:** A gram-negative bacteria that can originate in feces and spread via water. This pathogen can cause illnesses such as gastrointestinal diseases, dysentery, typhoid fever, and hepatitis A. In agriculture, risks of fecal coliform contamination in produce can be increased by allowing livestock to graze around or walk through bodies of water such as streams, as well as improper manure-based fertilizer use.

**E. coli:** A common gram-negative, intestinal bacteria found in warm-blooded organisms. Most strains are harmless, however some can cause food poisoning. E. coli contamination in produce is very similar to that of fecal coliform.

**CFU/100 ml:** A measurement of pathogen contamination. CFU stands for colony forming units, the number of which are counted per one hundred milliliters of the sampled substance.

# RESOURCES

The following websites and electronic documents are a selection of some of the most relevant food safety resources in New Entry's *Quick Guide to Food Safety Resources*, available online.

## **Family-Farmed.org's On-Farm Food Safety Project Tool**

Free web-based tool for generating a customized on-farm food safety plan based on "Harmonized GAP standards" developed by United Fresh and industry partners.

[www.onfarmfoodsafety.org](http://www.onfarmfoodsafety.org)

## **Good Agricultural Practices: A Self Audit for Growers and Handlers**

Allows you to verify how successfully you have adopted GAPs before undergoing the expense of paying for a third-party auditor to visit your farm.

[www.kyagr.com/marketing/documents/selfaudit.pdf](http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/documents/selfaudit.pdf)

## **Good Agricultural Practices GAP Certification: Is it Worth it?**

Outlines many of the benefits and costs growers should evaluate when considering the voluntary GAP certification process.

[www4.ncsu.edu/~rmrejesu/Food\\_Safety\\_Risk/ag-709 final printed.pdf](http://www4.ncsu.edu/~rmrejesu/Food_Safety_Risk/ag-709%20final%20printed.pdf)

## **National GAPs Network for Education and Training**

Online Produce Safety courses, as well as other GAPs trainings and events.

[www.gaps.cornell.edu](http://www.gaps.cornell.edu)

## **Penn State Extension Farm Food Safety**

Resources about GAPs, how to compare your farming practices with nation-wide GAP standards, and how to write a farm food safety plan.

[www.extension.psu.edu/food-safety/farm](http://www.extension.psu.edu/food-safety/farm)

## **UMassExtension Food Safety Programs: Good Agricultural Practices**

GAPs trainings and fact sheets, including pre- and post-natural disaster guidance.

[www.extension.umass.edu/nutrition/index.php/programs/food-safety/programs/good-agricultural-practices](http://www.extension.umass.edu/nutrition/index.php/programs/food-safety/programs/good-agricultural-practices)

## **USDA Good Agricultural and Good Handling Practices: An Audit Verification Program for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Industry**

Overview of the USDA GAP audit program, with an introduction to the auditing process and clear, concise explanations of each scope of the audit.

[www.agr.wa.gov/FP/Pubs/docs/181-GoodAgriculturalAndGoodHandlingPractices-Web.pdf](http://www.agr.wa.gov/FP/Pubs/docs/181-GoodAgriculturalAndGoodHandlingPractices-Web.pdf)

# RESOURCES

## **USDA Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices Audit Verification Program User's Guide**

Intended to provide guidance to the fresh fruit and vegetable industry on the requirements of the USDA GAP & GHP Audit Verification Program and preparing for a successful audit. Does not address every specific question on the USDA GAP&GHP audit checklist, but covers all the major topic areas of the audit.

This Guide costs \$25 plus shipping, and it can be ordered by filling out the form at [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=stelprdc5097151](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=stelprdc5097151). Once purchased, the publication can be duplicated without authorization from USDA.

## **UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture: Produce Safety and GAPs Resources**

Food safety topics, including hand washing, manure, compost, and irrigation. Includes information specific to Vermont.

[www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/?Page=gapresources.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/?Page=gapresources.html)

## **UVM Extension: Food Safety, Handling, and Processing Information for Vegetable and Berry Growers**

Nation-wide food safety and GAPs resources.

[www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/foodlinks.html](http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/foodlinks.html)



# APPENDIX A: USDA GAP & GHP AUDIT VERIFICATION CHECKLIST (FOR REFERENCE ONLY)

## USDA Good Agricultural Practices Good Handling Practices Audit Verification Checklist



This program is intended to assess a participant's efforts to minimize the risk of contamination of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and miscellaneous commodities by microbial pathogens based on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's "*Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*," and generally recognized good agricultural practices.

Firm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Audit Site(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Main Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Auditor (s): (list all auditors with the lead listed first) \_\_\_\_\_

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### USDA or Fed-State Office performing audit:

Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) Interviewed (use back of sheet if necessary to list all persons interviewed) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B:  
THE HENDERSON FARM GROWER  
FOOD SAFETY MANUAL  
(FOR REFERENCE ONLY)**

**The Henderson Farm Grower Food Safety Manual**

**Sean W. Henderson and Wesley L. Kline  
Rutgers Cooperative Extension  
291 Morton Ave.  
Millville, NJ 08332  
2008**