



**Fresh Produce
Food Safety Training
for
Farm and Shed Managers**

Complied by:

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TRACE BACK



This is a system that helps to locate the source of a problem.

Trace back codes can identify the shed that packed the produce, the farm that grew the produce, and even the harvester that picked the produce.

These codes, usually bar codes, are placed on the pack or, in more and more cases, on the produce item itself and are being required by supermarkets etc.

Therefore, it is imperative that you harvest, pack and ship produce as safe as possible.

These also are good tools for lawyers to identify people, farms etc to sue when things go wrong.

Example: Trace back System

- ***Outside each box's printed label has:***
 - **Producer, orchard & packing-house I.D.**
 - **Species, variety & size**
- ***Inside each box's printed label has:***
 - **Some companies have an initialed form**
 - **Employee I.D. and initialed by QC staff**
- ***Each fruit has:***
 - **PLU sticker with species and variety**

This information is logged into a computer and within seconds a the farm source of the produce can be identified.

Outbreak Scenario



- **Epidemiological investigation**
- **Environmental investigation**
 - *Trace-forward*
 - *Trace-backward*
- **Rapid response to halt an outbreak**
- **Sharing their findings with industry**
- **Proactive effort to prevent more outbreaks**

*Similar to traffic flow on
An interstate highway system*

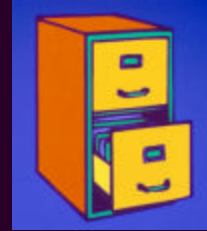
Once there is evidence that an outbreak has occurred, FDA or a Similar state agency will initiate an investigation into the cause of the outbreak, the source of the outbreak and the environment surrounding the outbreak. The **Trace-back** is put into action (the lane of the interstate lane returning from the destination back to the farm). If the source is confirmed than immediate action to recall produce and cease shipment is issued.

In the event that a farm or shed has shipped to multiple locations before the cease to ship order was issued then the trace forward system is initiated (the farm to destination lane of the interstate).

Implementation of the rapid response serves to halt an outbreak. The findings of the investigations are then shared with the industry.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE LIABILITY?

- **KEEP RECORDS! KEEP RECORDS!
KEEP RECORDS! DOCUMENT
EVERY EFFORT TO FOLLOW FDA
GUIDELINES**
- **DEVELOP GUIDELINES (GAPS &
GMPs) FOR ALL EMPLOYEES**
- **DESIGNATE INDIVIDUALS
RESPONSIBLE FOR AREAS AND
HAVE THEM OVERSEE
IMPLEMENTATION AND
MAINTAINING RECORDS.**



MAJOR TAKE HOME POINTS

Essential to producers & shippers

- **Sanitation is key**
- **Worker hygiene a must**
- **Anything water comes into contact can become contaminated**
- **KEEP RECORDS of everything employed to insure safety of your produce**

Upon completion of this training these are the key elements needed to be grasped if a producer or shipper is to develop a sound food safety for his operation.

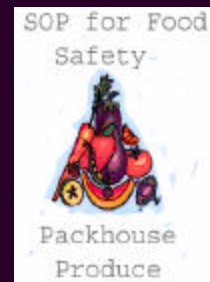
The first three has to do with the safe production and handling of produce.

The last one is essential in the event of an outbreak that is traced to his operation. Without it, serious monetary losses can occur.

Often growers get busy and do not take the time to document every thing that they need to. Remember, if it was not documented, it didn't happen.

The Big W Written Documentation

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for your operation addressing hygiene program, sanitation program and water monitoring program.



**SOP – hard copy
Record keeping - electronic**



If I learn only 1 Thing....

YOUR unique operation needs to have GAPs and GHP's that are tailored to your commodity and management practices in order to effectively reduce microbial risks and prevent contamination everyday. This is best communicated in an audit if you have a SOP manual for food safety and an individual designated as the Food Safety and Biosecurity person.

***Implementation of GAPs in a
food safety program, not
enough.***

RECORD THEM!!

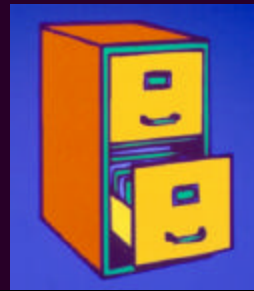
RECORD THEM!!

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Record keeping is essential.

Complete and accurate keeping is CRITICAL!

- **Record keeping**
 - ***Audits of records vs Inspection of facilities***
 - ***Indication of due diligence***



A part of the trace back systems is an audit of the production, handling, packing and shipping records to determine what caused the contamination, and / or if the appropriate GAPs were followed. If records are in order it show due diligence on the part of the grower or shipper and may help to reduce the incidence and or severity of law suits. They prevent the “loss of the farm!”



PRACTICING FOOD SAFETY

*now just a part
of the*

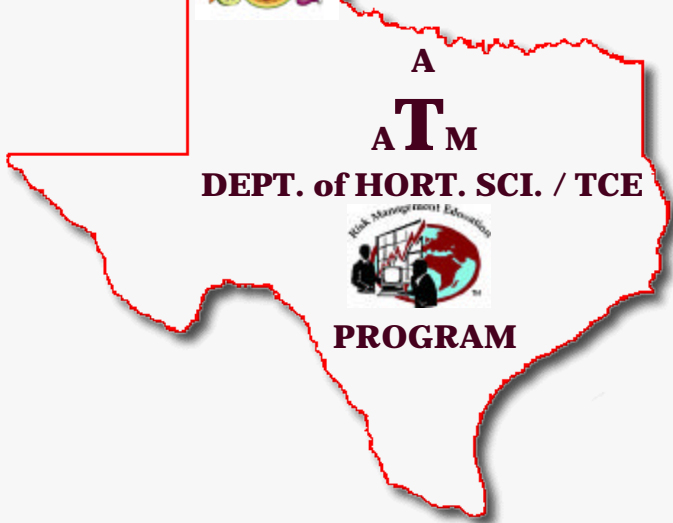
**“Cost of doing
Business”**

It is also your insurance policy against causing a food borne disease outbreak, and / or, the potential loss of the farm in the event that an outbreak is traced back to your facility!!

It All Boils Down To:

- Preventing contamination in all steps in the production-distribution system - ***“From plow to the plate!”***

The phrase *“Cleanliness is next to godliness”* is the bottom line for GAPs and Food Safety



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PROGRAM