

What if a public health concern is found during my On-Farm Readiness Review?

It is our preference to immediately address any serious concerns onsite. However, if the Produce Safety Team observes an "egregious" condition, which is defined as the occurrence of an imminent public health hazard unless corrective action is taken immediately, the Produce Safety Team is required to notify the Food and Drug Administration if:

- The product has entered commerce, and
- The issue cannot be addressed immediately.



How do I sign-up for an On-Farm Readiness Review?

To request an On-Farm Readiness Review, fill out the "On-Farm Readiness Review Request Form" online at www.uaex.uada.edu/producesafety.



For more information:

To request an On-Farm Readiness Review and view available resources, visit the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service website at:

www.uaex.uada.edu/producesafety

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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION

University of Arkansas System

Questions?

We're here to help!



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What to expect during an

ON-FARM READINESS REVIEW



What is an On-Farm Readiness Review?

An On-Farm Readiness Review is an extension of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Produce Safety Program. This is a service provided by the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service (UACES) Produce Safety team developed to expand our information and education efforts on the farm. This nonregulatory visit is intended to assist farmers with the Food Safety Modernization Act's (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

This opportunity allows farmers to have an in-depth conversation with a member of the Arkansas Produce Safety team regarding the Produce Safety Rule and how it may apply to farm practices and activities.

Who conducts On-Farm Readiness Reviews?

On-Farm Readiness Reviews may only be conducted by Arkansas Department of Agriculture Produce Safety Inspectors and the UACES Produce Safety team.

How is an On-Farm Readiness Review different from an inspection?

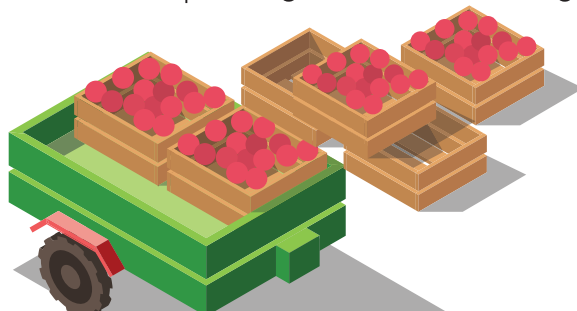
An On-Farm Readiness Review initiated by the grower is a voluntary, non-regulatory visit conducted by a member of the Arkansas Produce Safety team. The Readiness Review is designed so growers can determine the type of visit that would benefit them most. Types of

visits include a limited service visit to address a specific need(s) and a full-service visit which covers all aspects of the Produce Safety Rule as it may affect that particular farm. This outreach service includes record review and farm observations to help growers identify areas for produce safety improvements, and to understand the expectations of the Produce Safety Rule.

What should I do to prepare for an On-Farm Readiness Review?

To prepare for an On-Farm Readiness Review, at least one person from your farm must attend and complete the Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training Course before scheduling a visit. The PSA Grower Training will provide essential background knowledge about the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and recommend produce safety practices that will help you to get the most out of the On-Farm Readiness Review. In addition, this training satisfies the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement for covered farms that "at least one supervisor or responsible party" completes "food safety training - recognized as adequate" by FDA (21 C.F.R. §112.22(c)).

Visit www.uaex.uada.edu/producesafety for a list of upcoming PSA Grower Trainings.



If my farm is not covered under the FSMA Produce Safety Rule, can I still request an On-Farm Readiness Review?

At this time, priority is given to farms that are covered under the Produce Safety Rule. However, should you have questions or would like to discuss this service or any other technical assistance, please feel free to contact an Arkansas Produce Safety team member.

What happens during an On-Farm Readiness Review?

A Produce Safety team member will begin by asking a series of questions to better understand your farm's produce safety practices and farm procedures.

Visits will begin based upon what service was requested and/or the farm activity of the day.

On-Farm Readiness Reviews will always include a review of records mandated by the Produce Safety Rule.

A Produce Safety team member will ask to observe different areas of the farm to view harvesting, washing, and packing processes as well as storage or holding area activities covered by the Produce Safety Rule.

At the end of the visit, the Produce Safety team member will provide feedback and identify priority areas for improvement in produce safety practices.

The Produce Safety Rule Covers:



Agricultural Water



Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin



Domestic & Wild Animals



Sprouts



Worker Training Health & Hygiene



Equipment, Tools, Buildings, & Sanitation

Learn more:

Visit agriculture.arkansas.gov and select the Crops and Industry tab at the top of the homepage. When the dropdown menu appears, hover over Regulatory Services, and then choose Produce Safety from the list of options.

There you'll find:

- PSA Grower Training Courses in Arkansas
- Educational resources
- and more!



For more information:

For more information on the Produce Safety Rule and to view available resources, visit the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service website at:

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Your Guide to the

PRODUCE
SAFETY RULE



What is FSMA?

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is designed to prevent food contamination before the food reaches the consumer. Prior to FSMA, food safety efforts were focused on responding to contaminants after they had been discovered in the U.S. food supply.

What is the Produce Safety Rule?

The Produce Safety Rule is sometimes referred to as "The Rule." This regulation focuses on setting standards for the production, harvest, and handling of fruits and vegetables to prevent microbial contamination and reduce foodborne illnesses associated with fresh produce.



Who does "The Rule" affect?

The Rule affects farms that grow, harvest, pack, and hold produce covered by The Rule. In addition, The Rule covers a farm or mixed-type facility with an average annual income of produce sales of more than \$25,000 over a three-year rolling average, adjusted for inflation.

What is the Department of Agriculture's role?

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture (Department) is working with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) through a cooperative agreement to advance efforts for a nationally integrated food safety system. Additionally, the Department will work to promote understanding and compliance with the requirements of the FDA standards of the Produce Safety Rule.

What Department resources are available to growers?

The Department, through the Produce Safety Program, and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service (UACES) are conducting outreach and education efforts to help growers understand the expectations of the rule. The Department's Produce Safety team are available to answer questions concerning the Produce Safety Rule. The Produce Safety team is also offering growers On-Farm Readiness Review services in conjunction with the UACES. Reviews are intended to work in coordination with growers to help them understand the expectations of "The Rule" and how it may apply to their specific farm or operation.

Visit the Department of Agriculture website for more information and services being offered by the Produce Safety Program.

agriculture.arkansas.gov

When does The Rule go into effect?

- Covered farms with an average annual income of more than \$500,000.

Covered activities: January 26, 2018

- Covered farms with an average annual income of more than \$250,000 but less than \$500,000.

Covered activities: January 26, 2019

- Covered farms with an average annual income of more than \$25,000 but less than \$250,000.

Covered activities: January 26, 2020



What should you expect during an inspection?

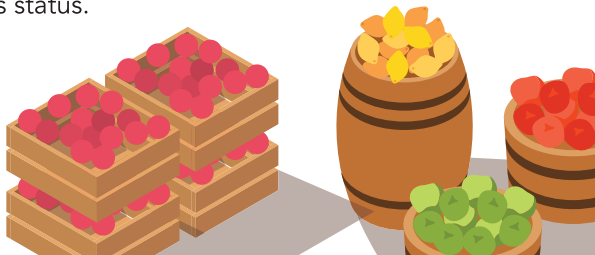
Inspections are part of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture (Department) regulatory program related to the Produce Safety Rule, established by the Food Safety Modernization Act to ensure that the minimum requirements of the standards are being implemented. This brochure provides an overview of the steps that state inspectors will take when conducting routine inspections for compliance with the Produce Safety Rule (PSR).

Scheduling the inspection

If the rule applies to your farm, the Produce Safety Program may inspect your farm for a variety of reasons, including a routine inspection, a follow-up to a previously conducted inspection, or as part of a foodborne outbreak investigation.

In most cases, a Produce Safety Inspector will call the farm and request to speak with the farm owner, manager, or designated person of authority knowledgeable in the growing, harvesting, packing, and holding activities to schedule the inspection. This designated person of authority should be a part of the scheduling process and accompany the Produce Safety team member during the inspection.

If your farm is determined to be eligible for a qualified exemption or your produce is determined to be eligible for the commercial processing exemption, the Produce Safety Inspector will review records that support this status.



For more information:

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What to Expect

DURING AN INSPECTION



Announced Inspections

The Produce Safety Inspector will schedule an inspection date that works for both the inspector and the farm's designated person of authority for the farm. In most cases, inspections will be scheduled within seven (7) calendar days of contact with the farm. If the farm's designee is not the produce safety/quality expert, the Produce Safety Inspector may suggest that a representative knowledgeable in the growing, harvesting, packing, and holding activities of the farm also be present for the inspection. Upon arrival, the Produce Safety Inspector will explain the general flow of inspection and discuss records that may need revision. The Produce Safety Inspector may inquire about biosecurity practices, hazards, safety protocols, and other requirements. The produce safety/quality representative of the farm could be asked to attend the inspection upon the Produce Safety Inspector's determination.

Unannounced Inspections

Most inspections will be announced but there are circumstances in which unannounced inspections may be conducted. The following are examples of when an unannounced inspection may occur:

- ▶ If your farm has previously had produce safety issues that have not been corrected;
- ▶ If a follow-up inspection is needed, an unannounced inspection works best to observe the progression of changes being made;
- ▶ If your farm is unresponsive (no contact within seven business days after reasonable contact attempts have been made) or is unwilling to set a date for the inspection; or
- ▶ In response to a complaint, recall, or foodborne outbreak investigation.

Day of the Inspection

When a Produce Safety Inspector arrives on your farm, they will ask to speak to the owner, person in charge, and/or designated person of authority. They will introduce themselves, provide the reason for the inspection, show identification, and issue a written Notice of Inspection.

Initial Interview

The Produce Safety Inspector will provide a brief inspection description, reason for inspection, and activities to be conducted. The amount of time an inspection will take depends on the type of inspection, farm activities, size of the farm, and what is observed during the inspection. The Produce Safety Inspector will ask about the activities performed on the day(s) of the inspection, including whether the farm is planting, harvesting, packing, or holding, and may ask about the farm's organization and workflow.

Farm Inspection

During the inspection, the Produce Safety Inspector will observe farm operations and may ask questions about farming practices and operations that cannot be observed during the inspection. While conducting a thorough examination of farm operations and activities, it is imperative that the Produce Safety Inspector write detailed notes, take photos if appropriate, and review required farm records such as training, cleaning and sanitation schedules, or other documents deemed necessary.

Throughout the inspection, the Produce Safety Inspector will explain what is being reviewed and why. If there are regulatory concerns, the Produce Safety Inspector will discuss and explain the reason(s) for each regulatory concern and its potential impact on public health.

Exit Interview

The person most responsible for the farm, such as the farm owner, manager, and/or designated person of authority for the farm, should be available during the exit interview.



The Produce Safety Inspector will review regulatory concerns, observations, and may provide information on resources and technical assistance. If corrections can be made during the inspection, the Produce Safety Inspector will document the corrections. If the deficiency cannot be corrected during the inspection, the Produce Safety Inspector will work with the farm owner, manager, or designated person of authority of the farm to determine a reasonable time frame to implement preventive measures with corrective actions. During the exit interview, the Produce Safety Inspector may identify preventive produce safety practices and conditions on the farm based on the requirements of the Produce Safety Rule. The Produce Safety Inspector will also answer questions you may have and provide a summary sheet with contact information that documents details of the inspection.

agriculture.arkansas.gov