



BEGINNING
FARMERS

Produce Safety

Meet Your Local Produce Safety Technician

Technicians will talk through some of the most common scenarios they encounter on farms and how to incorporate these learnings into their planning.

KEY TERMS

Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule: federal regulations for those who grow, harvest, pack and hold produce; many beginning farmers will not need to comply with the full set of regulations; however, it is important for growers to be aware of the laws, know their coverage status and understand how it could change in the future

Farm Food Safety Plan or Manual: a written document that outlines the farm's policies and procedures for food safety; it may also include recordkeeping logs or other supporting documents

Food Safety Policy: a statement that explains what the farm will do to achieve a desired food safety outcome; for example, a farm may have a policy that employees may not work if they are sick in order to prevent the spread of foodborne illness

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs): certification by the USDA or another organization that a farm is meeting a set of guidelines based on Good Agricultural Practices

Recordkeeping: making note of when things occur for the purpose of verifying they happened and/or collecting useful data; examples include harvest records, cleaning logs, wildlife scouting logs, etc.



KEY TERMS

Risk Assessment: a process of analyzing the farm's environment and practices to identify potential hazards and how likely they are to impact produce safety

SOP or Standard Operating

Procedure: a step-by-step set of instructions for carrying out a task in a standardized way

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Virtual or printed copies of Produce Safety Technician Interview Questions (included on page 3 of this handout)

How do you do this?

1. The facilitator will ask the technician to introduce themselves to the group
2. Each learner will introduce themselves to the technician as well
3. The technician will provide information about their programs and services
4. Space will be provided for learners to ask questions from their curiosity or the provided handout



Produce Safety

What am I going to do about it?

Produce Safety Technician Interview Questions



Michigan
On-Farm Produce Safety

<https://www.miofps.org/>

- Tell us about your experience and background with agriculture.
- What was the most memorable farm you've seen and why?
- If you had one piece of advice to give a person just starting out, what would it be?
- What was the smallest farm you've ever been on?
- What are some common issues you find on farms you visit?
- How do you ensure that what you see on a farm is kept confidential?
- Tell us about the types of services you can provide for a beginning farmer.



What does it mean for my farm?

Discuss with co-learners:

- Process the presentation together:
 - What was your biggest takeaway?
 - What concerns do you have about the program and services?
 - How might these concerns be addressed?
- Identify which food safety records would be useful to keep on your farm
 - How will you take records (ex. Clipboard, Google forms, etc.)?
 - When will records be taken?
 - Who is responsible for taking records?

Follow up with your Produce Safety Technician and invite them out to your farm. Technician contact information may be found on the Michigan On Farm Produce Safety website “Contact” page: <https://www.miofps.org/contact>.

RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL LEARNING

- Michigan Produce Safety Risk Assessment Video
- Food Safety Plan Templates from Michigan On Farm Produce Safety and the MSU Student Organic Farm

