

# Food Safety Questionnaire for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

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This document was prepared by United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association

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## Introduction

Safe food handling depends on myriad factors and no single resource can provide all answers to all questions. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's "Guide to Minimizing Microbial Hazards in Fresh Fruit and Vegetables" highlights practices in the growing, harvesting, packing, storage, and shipping of fresh produce that reduce or eliminate microbial hazards. Thus, any assessment to determine conformance with these practices, referred to as Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), should concentrate on systems or programs that address minimizing microbial hazards. However, chemical and physical hazards should not be neglected in an overall risk assessment.

With this in mind, members from the produce, retail, and foodservice industries developed a food safety questionnaire that can serve as the first step in the risk assessment process. United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association created this evaluation tool to encourage uniformity and consistency in determining food safety risks in produce operations. Also, the questionnaire can serve as a tool to assist handlers and distributors of fresh fruits and vegetables in evaluating compliance applicable federal and state laws, including but not limited to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). The questionnaire is designed to direct inquiries and develop information could then be independently evaluated by the grower/shipper, distributor, and retailer with respect to legal and regulatory requirements. The document can be used as a companion to the "Food Safety Auditing Guidelines: Core Elements of Good Agricultural Practices for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables" document, also developed by United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association.

Keep in mind that the sole purpose of the questionnaire is to assess "how" or "if" food safety issues are addressed in the production and distribution of fruits and vegetables. There is no "pass" or "fail" status or "right" or "wrong" answers associated with the completion of this questionnaire.

Differences between products, production practices, distribution and consumption, and the ever changing state of knowledge regarding food safety make it impossible for any single document to be comprehensive and absolutely authoritative. Components of this questionnaire may or may not be applicable to all operations or commodities. This document is a recommendation only.

Users of this document must bear in mind that as knowledge regarding food safety changes, so will measures to address those changes, as will the emphasis on particular issues by regulators, as well as regulations themselves. Neither this document, nor how food producers and distributors should address food safety, is set in stone. Users are strongly urged to maintain regular contact and avail themselves of information available through the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as state agricultural, environmental, academic, and public health authorities.

## Food Safety Questionnaire

*Note: The following questions are designed to evaluate your company's food safety operations. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Components of this questionnaire may or may not be applicable to all operations or commodities.*

Business Name(s): _____
Business Address(s): _____ _____
Contact Name: _____
Phone: _____ FAX: _____
Food Safety Coordinator Name: _____
Phone: _____ FAX: _____
Emergency Contact Name: _____
Phone (business): _____ FAX: _____
Phone (home) : _____

**Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)** refer to the guidelines set forth in the "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables," which was published by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1998.

### Section I. General History

#### 1.1 Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)

- |  |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1a. Does your operation have a GAPs program in place?  | Yes                      | No                       | N/A                      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.1b. Is the program documented?   | Yes                      | No                       | N/A                      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.1c. For operations (for example contract growing, harvesting, cooling, and packing operations or entities you purchase from) not under direct control, are there documented management programs in place to ensure food safety? _____<br>_____ |                          |                          |                          |
| 1.1d. Are GAPs audits conducted?   | Yes                      | No                       | N/A                      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 1.1e. How often are GAPs audits conducted? \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.1f. Are personnel trained on GAPs? Yes No N/A
- 1.1g. Is the GAPs program audited by an independent Third Party auditing company? Yes No N/A
- 1.1h. If yes, who is the Third Party auditing company? \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.1i. Are cooling and warehousing facilities audited by an independent auditing party? Yes No N/A
- 1.1j. Are GAPs program documentation, including internal and independent audit results, available for review? Yes No N/A

**1.2 Farm or Ranch Location(s)**

If applicable, list farm or growing locations by commodities/crops and season(s)

Site Name	Farm or Growing Location	Commodity(s)	Season(s)

If necessary, continue this table on additional pages.

**1.3 Facilities Location(s)**

If applicable, list all locations for packing, processing, storage, and cooling operations.

Site Name	Operation Location	Type of Operation	Commodity(s)	Season(s)

If necessary, continue this table on additional pages.

**1.4 Potential Sources of Contamination**

- 1.4a. Is there a management program in place that identifies potential sources of contamination? Yes No N/A

1.4b. When identifying potential sources of contamination, was prior land history and use and adjacent properties considered? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

1.4c. If potential sources of contamination are identified, are corrective measures in place to reduce or eliminate the potential risk? \_\_\_\_\_

1.4d. Is documentation concerning potential hazard identification and corrective actions available for review? Yes No N/A

**1.5 Pesticide Management Program**

1.5a. Does your company comply with all relevant county, state, and federal regulations? Yes No N/A

1.5b. Is an independent party used to test for pesticide compliance? Yes No N/A

1.5c. Is pesticide use on crops documented (records of chemical names, frequency, and amounts of chemical applied)? Yes No N/A

1.5d. Are these records available for review? Yes No N/A

**Section II. Agricultural Water**

**2.1 Water Quality Management Program**

2.1a. Is the quality of water source(s) and supplies assessed? Yes No N/A

2.1b. If appropriate, is the water quality tested annually? \_\_\_\_\_

2.1c. What is/are the source(s) of water? (circle all appropriate)

- a) Well                                      c) City Water Supply  
b) Open/Surface                            d) Other (explain)

2.1d. What is/are the method(s) of delivery and/or irrigation of water? \_\_\_\_\_

2.1e. Are water quality management documents, including tests results available for review? Yes No N/A

**Section III. Manure and Municipal Biosolids**

**3.1 Fertilizer Use**

3.1a. Is raw animal manure or leachate from raw manure used to supplement the soil? Yes No N/A

3.1b. Is composted or aged animal manure used to supplement the soil? Yes No N/A

- 3.1c. If composted animal manure is used, are records maintained showing that animal manures are properly composted, such as certifications or Standard Operating Procedures for composting? Yes No N/A
- 3.1d. Are there controls in place to prevent indirect contamination from raw animal manure from adjacent properties? Yes No N/A
- 3.1e. Are municipal biosolids used to supplement the soil? Yes No N/A
- 3.1f. Are records of organic and non-organic fertilizer applications kept and available for review? Yes No N/A

## Section IV. Employee Health and Hygiene

### 4.1 Management Program

- 4.1a. Are management programs for health and hygienic practices in place to minimize the risk of contamination from food, employees, and equipment? Yes No N/A
- 4.1b. Is there a program in place to exclude ill employees from direct contact with food? Yes No N/A
- 4.1c. Would employee health and hygiene management documents be available for review? Yes No N/A

### 4.2 Employee Training Program

- 4.2a. Is there a documented employee food safety training program? Yes No N/A
- 4.2b. What is the frequency of the training? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.2c. Does the training address:
- |   |                              |                             |                              |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sanitation programs?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Good Agricultural Practices?                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Good Manufacturing Practices?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Employee health?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Employee hygiene?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Hand washing and sanitizing?                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Appropriate use of protective and sanitary clothing and supplies? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
- 4.2d. Are training documents available for review? Yes No N/A



## Section V. Field Sanitation

### 5.1 Management Program

- 5.1a. Is there a management program to identify potential contamination risks during the growing and harvesting of crops? Yes No N/A
- 5.1b. Does the management program have documented procedures to address sanitation requirements in the field operations, including the growing and harvesting operations? Yes No N/A
- 5.1c. Does the field sanitation program address:
- |   |                              |                             |                              |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Equipment sanitation and maintenance?         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Employee health and hygiene?                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Appropriate number of toilets for employees?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Toilet facility sanitation and maintenance?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Proper hand washing facilities for employees? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Employee training?                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
- 5.1d. Are field sanitation program documents available for review? Yes No N/A

## Section VI. Packing Facility Sanitation (field- or shed-packed)

### 6.1 Management Program

- 6.1a. Is there a management program to identify potential contamination risks in the packing operation(s)? Yes No N/A
- 6.1b. Does the management program have documented procedures to address sanitation requirements in the packing operation(s)? Yes No N/A
- 6.1c. Does the packing facility sanitation program address:
- |   |                              |                             |                              |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pest control?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Water quality?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Equipment, containers, and facility sanitation and maintenance? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Employee health and hygiene?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Hand washing facilities?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Employee training?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
- 6.1d. Are current GAPs guidelines followed? Yes No N/A
- 6.1e. Are packing facility sanitation program documents available for review? Yes No N/A

## Section VII. Cooling Facility Sanitation

### 7.1 Management Program

7.1a. Are cooler facilities under your company management? Yes No N/A

7.1b. If cooled by an outside party, what is the name and location(s) of the cooling operation(s) and can they make available the following information?

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7.1c. Is there a management program to identify potential contamination risks in the cooling operation(s)? Yes No N/A

7.1d. Does the management program have documented procedures to address sanitation requirements in the cooling operation(s)? Yes No N/A

7.1e. What type of cooling system(s) is used? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7.1f. If water (in any of its forms, including ice) is used in the cooling, how is water quality maintained for food safety? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7.1g. Does the cooling facility sanitation program address:

Pest control?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Equipment, containers, and facility sanitation and maintenance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Employee health and hygiene?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hand washing facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Employee training?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

7.1h. Are current GAPs guidelines followed? Yes No N/A

7.1i. Are the cooling facility sanitation program documents available for review? Yes No N/A

## Section VIII. Transportation

### 8.1 Transportation Food Safety Controls

8.1a. Are the transport vehicles inspected prior to loading and unloading? Yes No N/A

- 8.1b. Does the inspection include checks for:
- |                                   |                              |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cleanliness?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Off-odors?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| Appropriate temperature controls? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
- 8.1c. Are procedures in place to ensure that transport vehicles are properly constructed and maintained to protect product(s) from contamination? Yes No N/A
- 8.1d. What procedures are in place to ensure that sanitation has occurred between cargoes to reduce contamination of product(s)? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.1e. Are transport vehicles allowed to carry any nonfood and non produce products (aside from packaging materials, pallets, and braces)? Yes No N/A
- 8.1f. Can transport vehicles maintain appropriate temperature controls during appropriate phases of distribution? Yes No N/A
- 8.1g. Does temperature monitoring occur during transportation, such as the use of recording thermometer, wireless temperature tracking system or time/temperature integrators/indicators? Yes No N/A
- 8.1h. Is documentation pertaining to transportation food safety controls available for review? Yes No N/A

## IX. Traceback/Recall Program

### 9.1 Management Programs

- 9.1a. Is there a traceability program in place? Yes No N/A
- 9.1b. Is there a recall program in place? Yes No N/A
- 9.1c. Does the traceability program include grower, ranch(s), packing operation(s), lots/field identification? Yes No N/A
- 9.1d. Does the traceability program include distribution information? Yes No N/A
- 9.1e. How are product(s) identified, i.e. ranch name, lot #, bar codes? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

9.1f. Are mock recall exercises conducted? Yes No N/A

9.1g. In the event of a recall, is product information available in a timely manner? Yes No N/A

9.1h. Is there a designated recall coordinator identified? Yes No N/A

9.1i. Who is the recall coordinator and what is their contact information (business and emergency information)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9.1j. Are documents pertaining to your traceability and recall programs available for review? Yes No N/A

**X. Explanation of Not Applicable (N/A) Responses**

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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