



Global Harmonization of Good Agricultural Practices

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GAP Standards in N. America



- USDA GAP
- GlobalG.A.P
- SQF 1000
- PrimusGFS
- CanadaGAP
- SENASICA GAP
- NSF Davis Fresh
- Georgia GAPs
- AIB GAP
- SCS GAP
- Silliker GAP
- Steritech GAP/GHP
- AFDO Model Code for Produce Safety
- USDA National Organic Standard
- California Leafy Greens
- California Tomato Farmers GAP
- Mushroom GAPs
- Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for Watermelon
- California Strawberry Industry Food Safety Program
- And more...



Fresh Produce Situation



- Operations pay for and endure multiple audits
 - Standards are similar, but different enough to require complete repeat of audit
 - Operations complaining of “audit fatigue”
- Customers find it difficult to accept audits from different schemes
 - Standards and audit processes are too different to compare results



United Fresh *Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards, April 2009*



- Over 200 leaders from each stage of the produce supply chain, government, and third-party standard owners and auditors explored the potential value of harmonization and greater alignment of standards
- Produce GAP standards used in various audits in North America seem to be at least 90% the same, providing a clear opportunity for harmonization.



Prior Harmonization Efforts



- Guidance documents (FDA GAPs)
- California Leafy Greens Best Practices
- Food Safety Leadership Council
- SQF 1000 produce standards
- GlobalG.A.P
- Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)



Outcomes From the Conference



- Harmonization of general GAP standards must be transparent with open communication of intent, progress, and conclusions
- Retailers, foodservice companies, fresh-cut processors, grower-shippers, auditors and standard owners, and government must all be at the table working together
- Inclusion of non-food safety standards (environmental, social issues) is a likely obstacle to harmonization, particularly in North America. These issues may need to be addressed separately



Process to Harmonization



Identified a small but influential Steering Committee of major industry representatives with the ability to drive broad industry acceptance of common standards:

McDonald's	Wegmans	Chiquita Fresh Express
Yum Brands	Ahold	Sun World International
Pro*Act	Kroger	DiMare Company
U.S. Foodservice	Loblaws	Green Giant Fresh
Darden	Safeway	Sunkist Growers
Jack in the Box	Schnucks	Castellini Co.
Sysco	Publix	McEntire Produce
Subway	Walmart	Dole Food Company
Markon	Food Lion	The Giumarra Companies
River Ranch	Supervalu	Tanimura & Antle
Del Monte Fresh	Costco	C.H. Robinson
Taylor Farms	14 produce associations	



Technical Working Group



- Over 150 stakeholders, representing:
 - Customers, suppliers, government, audit companies, association staffs;
 - A broad scope of fresh produce commodities;
 - A broad scope of operation sizes; and
 - A broad scope of producing regions, including Mexico and Canada.
 - Open invitation for participation; no stakeholders excluded



Standards Harmonized from



- California Leafy Greens
- Mushroom GAPs
- SENASICA
- Silliker
- USDA
- Tomato Food Safety Audit Protocol
- Community Alliance with Family Farmers
- California Strawberry Commission
- AIB
- AFDO Model Code
- CanadaGAP
- GlobalG.A.P
- SQF 1000



Two Standards Now Drafted: Field Operation, Harvest and Field Pack, and Post-harvest Operations



	Requirement	Procedure	Verification	Corrective Action
1.	General Questions			
1.1.	Management Responsibility			
1.1.1.	A food safety policy shall be in place.	A written policy shall outline a commitment to food safety, in general terms, how it is implemented and how it is communicated to employees, and be signed by Senior Management.	The auditor observes the food safety policy, observes that it is signed by Senior Management, and observes that it has been communicated to all employees in a manner that can be understood.	The operation creates or revises the policy, or its communication to employees, to be in compliance.
1.1.2.	Management has designated individual(s) with roles and responsibilities for food safety functions.	The food safety plan shall designate who has the responsibility and authority for food safety, including a provision for the absence of key personnel. Twenty-four hour contact information shall be available for these individuals in case of food safety emergencies. These roles and responsibilities shall be communicated within the organization.	Auditor observes that the food safety plan has identified individual(s) for key food safety activities. Auditor verifies that procedures include provisions for when the identified individual is not present.	Operation identifies individual(s) for key food safety activities in the food safety plan. Operation identifies actions to be taken when the identified individual(s) are not present.
1.1.3.	There is a disciplinary policy for food safety violations	There shall be a policy that establishes corrective actions for personnel who violate established food safety policies or procedures.	Auditor observes the policy and checks for examples of enforcement	The operation creates or revises the policy, or its communication to employees, to be in compliance.
1.2.	Food Safety Plan			
1.2.1.	There shall be a written food safety plan that covers the operation.	The food safety plan shall identify all locations of the operation and products covered by the plan. The plan shall address potential physical, chemical, and biological	Auditor shall observe the food safety plan and verify that the plan has considered potential	Operation develops or completes a food safety plan for all locations of operation.

Fast Facts about the Field Standard



- 84 audit items
- 14 written policies/procedures, such as
 - Food safety plan
 - Traceability and recall programs
 - Toilet, worker hygiene and health policy
 - Water management plan
- 14 types of records, including
 - Training records
 - Soil Amendments
 - Agricultural Chemicals
 - Pre-planting and pre-harvest risk assessments
 - Microbiological testing (if performed)



Next Steps



- Select 4-5 commodities to pilot the harmonized standards
 - Apples, potatoes, leafy greens, mushrooms, citrus
 - Large and small operations
 - Audit team: operation, auditor, customer
- Benchmark to global standards: GFSI, GlobalG.A.P
- Use findings to update and finalize harmonized standards (mid-2011)



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Produce GAPs Harmonization Initiative

Background

Many leaders throughout the produce industry have increasingly recognized the cost and inefficiency of multiple standards and audits now being used to measure compliance with Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs). Neither produce suppliers nor retailers and foodservice companies are well served when duplicative standards and audits raise total supply chain costs without enhancement of overall food safety.

In addition to general business leaders, the United Fresh Produce Association Food Safety & Technology Council, consisting of food safety and quality assurance experts across the supply chain, has looked at a variety of GAP standards and audits in use and under development, and has concluded that there is sound scientific potential for harmonizing basic GAP standards to meet the needs of these many stakeholders.

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