

Food Safety for Produce Farmers

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) during preharvest, harvest, and postharvest of produce.

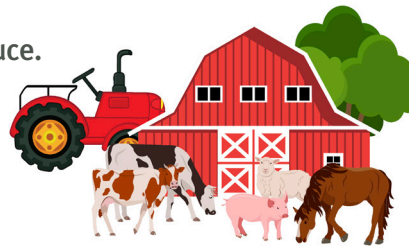
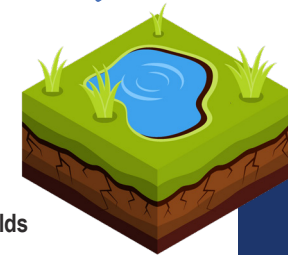


Worker Health & Hygiene

- Have a designated break area with equipped restrooms for workers.
- Provide food safety training to harvest crew and workers.
- Keep records of preharvest, harvest, and postharvest activities (microbial water testing results, training certificates for workers).
- Take corrective measures when necessary.
- Have a designated person to manage food safety practices on the farm.
- Implement a handwashing station with liquid soap, disposable paper towels, and clean water near work areas.
- Implement a policy for reporting illness or injury among workers.

Land & Water

- Monitor microbial quality of water used in the field (water testing).
- Keep animals away from produce fields (domesticated, wild, and livestock).
- Balance conservation practices with farm food safety (keep buffer strips around water sources).
- Monitor microbial quality of water used during harvest and post-harvest activities.
- Be aware of adjacent land use and high-risk areas.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved sanitizer in wash water to prevent cross-contamination.
- Monitor sanitizer levels in the wash tank (if using).



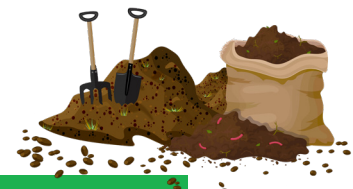
Facilities & Equipment

- Clean and sanitize harvest tools, bins, packing line, equipment, and facility.
- Regularly inspect and maintain equipment to ensure proper functioning.
- Implement a cleaning schedule for all equipment and facilities.
- Provide adequate storage space for tools and equipment to prevent contamination.



Storage & Transport

- Transport fresh produce in clean bins and trucks and under proper temperature.
- Store fresh produce in clean areas and under proper temperature.
- Implement a first in, first out (FIFO) system for harvested produce storage.
- Monitor temperature and humidity levels in storage areas to prevent spoilage.
- Regularly inspect storage containers for damage or contamination.
- Regularly clean and sanitize transport containers and vehicles after each use.



Manure & Soil

- Compost animal manure.
- Keep manure storage areas away from produce fields to minimize contamination risks.

Find more information on the Alabama Extension website at www.aces.edu:

- AgWater Safety Program (FREE microbial water testing)
- Step-by-Step Guide to Small Farm Irrigation
- Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program Helps Offset Costs for Growers
- Food Safety for Southern US Food Crop Producers After Flooding