



*Wegmans*

Food Safety  
and Small Growers


FMI Future Connect Webinar  
May 29, 2013



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Dave Corsi


- Why is food safety so critical at small farms?
- Increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Outbreaks dilute consumer confidence
- Need to protect our customers, our brand, and our suppliers



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## Bill Pool

- Provide an overview of what we've done over the past 7 years to help small, local growers understand why food safety is critical
- Some small growers may talk about exemption from FSMA...“Tester amendment”
- Regardless of size of farm....pathogens don't differentiate small farm from large farm



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## Wegmans Requirements...

- We are requiring GAPs audits for all items by September 2013...this has been phased in
- Our approach is that **one** audit covers any item grown on their farm
- No need for multiple audits over the season; we recognize that multiple audits can be very expensive for our growers

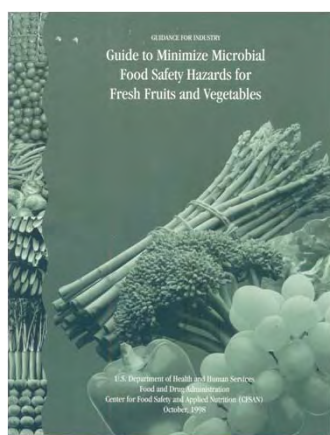


## Why did we get started...


- Concern about food safety and small growers led to working with Cornell University and the National GAPS Program
- Did first training sessions in **January 2005**
- Focus was on growers in NY state
- Wasn't always received with open arms...



## 1998 FDA GAPs Guide




- Water
- Soil Amendments
- Worker Health
- Sanitary Facilities
- Field Sanitation
- Packing Facilities
- Transportation
- **VOLUNTARY**



**WEGMANS GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAPs) WORKSHOP**  
**January 2005**  
**DRAFT Program Agenda**

The goal of this one-day workshop is to acquaint Wegmans growers with the importance of implementing Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in reducing microbial risks during the production and distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables.

- Food Safety Begins on the Farm: an Overview
- Reducing Microbial Risks in Fresh Fruits and Vegetables with Good Agricultural Practices
- Worker Education and Training: A Vital Component of GAPs
- Manure and Compost
- The Importance of Water Quality
- Interactive Small Group Activities: Water Quality, Chlorination, and Hand-Washing
- Sanitation in the Field and Packing House
- Refreshment Break
- Assessing Food Safety Risks on Your Farm
- Developing a Crisis Management Plan



## A Suggestion Became a Requirement

- In July 2006, Wegmans sent letter to our small, local growers informing them that GAPs would be required to do business with us
- In Winter of 2007, we collaborated with Rutgers University and the USDA, and expanded training to growers in New Jersey
- GAPs required for certain items in **2008**



**Wegmans GAPs Produce Safety Workshop**  
2 Academy Drive, Westampton, NJ 08060

**Burlington County Cooperative Extension Office**  
**March 30, 2007 8:30AM – 2:00PM**

Co-sponsored by: Wegmans Food Markets, Rutgers University, New Jersey Department of Agriculture  
Cornell University, United States Department of Agriculture

**Registration and coffee**

**Welcome and introductions**  
Why we are here and why it is important?  
Dave Corsi, **Wegmans Food Markets**

**Food Safety: A Supermarket Perspective**  
Bill Pool  
Wegmans Food Markets

**Pathogens and Produce: What You Should Know**  
Don Schaffner  
**Rutgers University** Extension Specialist

**Break**



**GAPs for the Farm and Packinghouse**  
Bob Gravani, Director  
**National GAPs Program at Cornell University**

**Audit Perspectives from the USDA**  
Ken Petersen, Staff Assistant GAP & GHP Program  
**USDA**, Washington, DC

**Lunch**  
Provided by Wegmans Food Markets

**Preparing for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Audit**  
Wes Kline, Rutgers University Extension Specialist  
Larry Hardwick, **NJ Department of Agriculture**


**Summary and Discussion**



# Additional Topics

**2009**  
**Available Funding and Common Audit Problems**  
Bill Lyons and Marty Farrell  
Farm Products Division, New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets  
**Grower Perspective on Writing a Farm Food Safety Plan**  
Brian Reeves, Reeves Farms, Baldwinsville, NY  
**Writing your Farm Food Safety Plan Workshop**  
Small work groups with Betsy Bihn

**2010**  
**Food Defense and Crisis Management; What You Need to Know**  
Bob Gravani, National GAPs Program, Cornell University






## Since then...



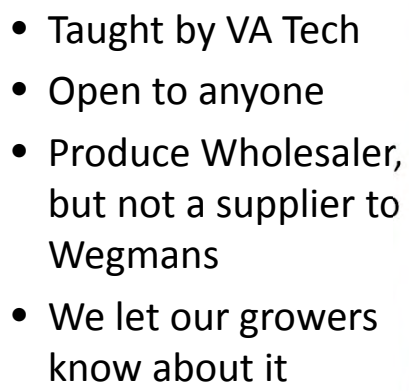
- In 2011, we worked with Penn State
- The University of Massachusetts and MA Dept. of Agriculture in December 2012
- The University of Maryland and MD Dept. of Agriculture...with local growers at Columbia
- Virginia Tech for GAPs meeting in March 2013



## A review of topics....

- Importance of **Water Quality... Manure/ Compost... Personal Health and Hygiene**
- How to write a farm food safety plan...
- Review of USDA GAPs audit findings...
- Get a grower to talk about GAPs...
- Available funding to help cover audit costs







## Wegmans Role


- We **facilitate** the meetings, and talk about the impact of outbreaks from our perspective
- Provide meeting site and food
- Provide training materials and handouts
- Have reimbursed growers \$400 towards the cost of their audits...**90** growers in 2012 and committed again this year



## Our Collaborators

- Robert Gravani, Ph.D., Director of the National GAPs Program at Cornell University
- Wesley Kline, Ph.D., Agricultural Agent with Rutgers University Cooperative Extension
- Ken Petersen, Head, Audit Programs Section Specialty Crops Inspection Division, USDA






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## Cornell University


- Bob Gravani, Ph.D.
- The National GAPs program at Cornell
- The Produce Safety Alliance
- Education that is available for growers




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## GAPs Activities at Cornell

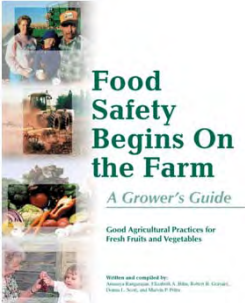
- 1998 First USDA grant to address GAPs in the NE
- 1999 National GAPs program first funded
- Development of a series of education materials
- Expansion of National GAPs program
- 2010 Produce Safety Alliance created








## A Comprehensive Food Safety Program

- Grower's Guide
- GAPs Pamphlet
- Farm Assessment
- Resource Manual
- Exhibit & Poster
- Educational materials for worker training
- GAPsNET: [www.gaps.cornell.edu](http://www.gaps.cornell.edu)
- GAPS Online Produce Safety Course









Cornell University

Department of Food Science

SEARCH CORNELL

go

Pages

People

more options

## Welcome to the GAPsNET

Good Agricultural Practices Network for Education and Training

Home

View National GAPs Educational Materials


Events Calendar


Collaborators

Research & Extension Publications Database

Web Links

Who We Are & Contacts





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Good Agricultural Practices Online Produce Safety Course Outline

Module One: Welcome

Module Two: Shared Responsibility in Food Safety

Module Three: Good Agricultural Practices

3.1.0 Worker Training, Hygiene, and Health

3.2.0 Water Use

3.3.0 Postharvest Water Use

3.4.0 Soil Amendments

3.5.0 Cleaning and Sanitation

3.6.0 Traceback and Recall

3.7.0 Crisis Management

3.8.0 Other Important Practices

Module Four: Implementing Change

4.1.0 Education and Training in Food Safety

4.2.0 Building the Plan

Module Five: Course Conclusion

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Educational Materials for Workers

• Photonovel series

• Coloring Book

• Magnets

• Fruits, Vegetables, and Food Safety: Health and Hygiene on the Farm

• Field Hygiene Poster Series


Post Future Connect Webinar Series

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## One Educational Approach

**POR FAVOR, DEPOSITE EL PAPEL HIGIÉNICO USADO DENTRO DEL INODORO**




**EL PAPEL HIGIÉNICO NO ATORA LOS INODOROS**




**TOILET PAPER WILL NOT OBSTRUCT TOILETS**

**PLEASE PUT USED TOILET PAPER IN THE TOILET**

**LÁVESE LOS MANOS FRECUENTEMENTE**




**ANTES Y DESPUÉS DE USAR EL BAÑO, COMER, BEBER, O FUMAR**




**BEFORE AND AFTER USING THE TOILET, EATING, DRINKING, OR SMOKING**

**WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN!**

**USE TOILET FACILITIES IN FIELD**




**YES SI**




**NO NO**

**USE LOS BAÑOS DISPONIBLE EN EL CAMPO**

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- Cooperative agreement between Cornell University, FDA, and USDA
- Outreach and Education Program
- PSA Established on October 1, 2010
- Project length: 3 years
- Just granted a one year, no cost extension



**Target Audiences**



- Fresh produce growers, packers, and grower cooperatives with special emphasis on small and very small scale farms and packinghouses
  - Not to the exclusion of any farmer
- Regulatory personnel
- All others interested in produce food safety, GAPs, and co-management



**Primary Goals**

- Education and outreach to improve understanding and implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and co-management strategies
- Developing a standardized education and training curriculum to assist with the implementation of FDA's produce safety regulation





# Curriculum Development Process

Identify GAPs Challenges

Set Goals

Develop Objectives

Create Content



# Visit Our Website

<http://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu>



Post Future Connect Webinar Series

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The image shows the Wegmans logo in the top left corner. To its right is a decorative header featuring a row of stylized vegetables (broccoli, carrot, radish, green beans, and onion) growing out of a patch of soil under a blue sky with clouds.

## Rutgers Cooperative Extension

- Wes Kline, Ph.D.
- Role of extension in grower education
- Partnership with NJ Department of Agriculture and training at the NJ Vegetable Growers Annual Conference





## Food Safety Partnership

Inform growers and the industry on food safety principals


Presentations made at grower meetings, articles written for newsletters and displays manned at trade shows





## History of Program

- A self audit checklist was developed for growers to assess their own operations (March 20, 2000)
- NJDA agreed to set up a third party food safety audit program to certify New Jersey growers and shippers
- NJDA staff and Rutgers Cooperative Extension staff compiled a third party audit checklist that was ready for the 2000 growing season.
- In 2002 the program started offering third party audits to growers, shippers and suppliers



## Areas Included in the Self Audit

- Water
- Manure
- Worker Health and Hygiene
- Field Sanitation
- Packing Facility Practices
- Transportation
- Traceback



- Training sessions are usually two to six hours
  - Topics
    - Food Safety: A Supermarket Perspective
    - Pathogens and Produce: What You Should Know
    - Good Agricultural Practices for the Farm and Packinghouse
    - Problems Observed During Mock Third Party Audits
    - Preparing for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Audit



Developing  
a Plan  
for Third-Party  
Audits



Good Agricultural Practices  
(GAPs)





**Good Agricultural Practices & Food Safety-  
How to Prepare for a 3rd Party Audit**

**ANDREW LEVARI, JR**

has successfully completed a 2 hour training session held on January 17, 2008  
at the 2008 Atlantic Coast Agriculture Conference and Trade Show, Atlantic City, New Jersey.  
This training was sponsored by The New Jersey Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the  
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station and Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

Wesley L. Kline, Ph.D.  
New Jersey GAPs Coordinator and Trainer





1999-2013 training sessions

- Food Safety Training
  - 2,590
- Third Party Audit Training
  - 1,213
- Number of Events
  - 49
- Third Party Mock Audits
  - 85



# RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station



## Vegetable Crops Online Resources Center



Prof. Andy Wyenandt  
Extension Specialist in  
Plant Pathology

Monday, October 6, 2008

Home

Veg Farm Resources

News Articles

Fact Sheets

Plant & Pest Advisory

Calendar/Events

Centers

Subscribe

Support Our Work

Find Our Experts

Contact

Resources:

### Food Safety

#### Food Safety and Food Borne Illnesses

Wesley Kline, Ph.D., Cumberland County Agricultural Agent

Growers and produce organizations continue to be asked about their food safety plans and whether they have a third party auditor to evaluate their operations. This website provides information that will help growers develop their food safety plan and prepare for those audits. There is a frequently asked question section which allows individuals to see the questions already asked and post a question to the website. These questions will be answered directly with the person posting it and be added to questions asked on the website.

The following information gives a general overview about the seriousness of the problem and why there are more problems today.

#### How serious is the problem?

Initially outbreaks were traced to poultry, beef and fish, but increasingly fresh produce is recognized as a source. In the 1970's there were two outbreaks/year with an average of 21 cases in each outbreak. This increased in the 1990's to 16 outbreaks/year averaging 43 cases per outbreak.

|                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Good Ag Practices Articles (PDF)</b></p> <p>Select ...</p> |
| <p><b>Third Party Audit Manual (PDF)</b></p> <p>Select ...</p>   |
| <p><b>Manual Forms (PDF)</b></p> <p>Select ...</p>               |

**GAPS Resource Materials**

Order Form


NOTE: Items in Order Form can also be ordered directly from Cornell University

**Ask Wes a Food Safety Question**

NOTE: Wes will respond directly to you

**Additional Food Safety Links**

PLANT & PEST ADVISORY

The top of the slide features the Wegmans logo in a stylized script font on the left. To its right is a horizontal illustration of a garden bed with brown soil. Five vegetables are shown growing: a carrot with a green sprout, a green bell pepper with a sprout, a red radish with a sprout, a green leafy vegetable (like lettuce) with a sprout, and a purple onion with a sprout. The background of the illustration is a light blue sky with white clouds.

# Wegmans

- Produce Safety Task Force Formed
  - NJDA
  - NJAES
  - NJ Department of Health
  - NJ Processors Association
  - NJ Grocers Association
  - NJ Restaurant Association
  - Grower representatives
- Weekly question and answer column
- Monthly question and answer column
- Advanced Food Safety Workshop



Remember The First Step in Food Safety is Common Sense




Food Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility



**Ken Petersen**  
Head, Audit Programs Section  
Specialty Crops Inspection Division  
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service  
Washington DC








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## USDA GAP&GHP Program


- Voluntary, User Fee funded program
- Audits conducted by either federal or state department of agriculture employees trained and licensed to perform audits
- Nationwide program, auditors located in 36 states; over 4,000 audits conducted in FY12
- Audits conducted in 48 states, Canada, Chile



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## USDA GAP&GHP Program


- Auditors are selected from existing pool of fruit and vegetable inspectors, thus they “know” fruit and vegetables
- Must undergo rigorous training and evaluation program



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## USDA GAP&GHP Program


- All audits are based on FDA Guidance Documents and industry best practices.
- Audit Types
  - Generic GAP&GHP
  - Harmonized GAP
  - Commodity Specific GAPs (tomato, leafy greens, mushrooms, cantaloupes)



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## USDA GAP&GHP Program

- Preparing for an audit
  - Must have developed and implemented a written food safety plan
  - Refer to specific audit checklist for required documentation
  - Perform a self audit
  - Audits need to be conducted while active harvesting activities are being performed



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## USDA GAP&GHP Program

- To schedule an audit:
  - Call local Inspection Office
  - Visit the USDA website for contact information
    - [www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp)



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## Key Points

- Need to protect our brand, our customers and our suppliers
- **Collaborations/partnerships** are critical to success
- Win-Win-Win....growers can access to markets and customers get freshest product possible




- We don't charge growers for the training; we will pay expenses associated with training
- We schedule sessions in off-seasons to encourage participation
- Takes effort and commitment...won't always be welcomed!
- A GAPs audit does **not** guarantee safety...but it does show if the grower has the right things in place...



## Dave Corsi....Summary & Close

- Explains why small growers should not be excluded from following common food safety practices
- You're not alone...
- A journey. It will take an investment of time to establish this requirement



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## Any Questions??

Contact information

- Bill Pool [Bill.Pool@Wegmans.com](mailto:Bill.Pool@Wegmans.com)
- Bob Gravani [RBG2@Cornell.edu](mailto:RBG2@Cornell.edu)
- Wes Kline [WKline@AESOP.Rutgers.edu](mailto:WKline@AESOP.Rutgers.edu)
- Ken Petersen [Ken.Petersen@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Ken.Petersen@ams.usda.gov)



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## Resources to get started...

- Cooperative Extension offices and agents
- Land-grant universities...every state has one
- National GAPs Program [www.gaps.cornell.edu](http://www.gaps.cornell.edu)
- USDA GAPs Program [www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp)
- State Departments of Agriculture
- Produce Safety Alliance (PSA)  
[www.producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu](http://www.producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu)