

# **2024 Food Safety Update**

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# Outline

- Produce Safety Rule Updates
- Industry resources





# FSMA Produce Safety Rule

- Inspections will continue
- Since March 2023 “significant observations” are documented in writing during inspections
- Areas of concern:
  - Employee training/ Health and hygiene practices
  - Cleaning and sanitation of food contact surfaces
  - Record keeping
- Need help?
  - Work with Extension
  - On farm readiness review



# FSMA Produce Safety Rule (2023)

**1**

Farms **not covered** by the  
Produce Safety  
Rule

Average sales  
<\$30,509  
Produce Sales for  
last 3 years

**2**

Farms **eligible  
for a qualified  
exemption and  
modified  
requirements**

**3**

**Covered Farms**  
>\$610,182 food  
sales for last 3  
years **AND** most  
sales are not to  
end consumer

**Covered**  
Very small farms  
(\$30,509-\$250,000)  
Small farms  
(\$250,000-\$500,000)

## Determine where your farm falls under the Produce Safety Rule (PSR) Template for 2023

Name and address of farm: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The objective of this document is to help farms determine their status within the Produce Safety Rule. The questions outlined follow a specific order so that the reader can have the pertinent information required to determine if the farm is not covered, eligible for a qualified exemption and modified requirements or a covered farm. If you need assistance, contact information for NCSU Produce Safety Team is listed on page 6.

### Definition of Produce

Produce means any fruit or vegetable (including mixes of intact fruits and vegetables) and includes mushrooms, sprouts (irrespective of seed source), peanuts, tree nuts, and herbs. A fruit is the edible reproductive body of a seed plant or tree nut (such as apple, orange, and almond) such that fruit means the harvestable or harvested part of a plant developed from a flower. A vegetable is the edible part of an herbaceous plant (such as cabbage or potato) or fleshy fruiting body of a fungus (such as white button or shiitake) grown for an edible part such that vegetable means the harvestable or harvested part of any plant or fungus whose fruit, fleshy fruiting bodies, seeds, roots, tubers, bulbs, stems, leaves, or flower parts are used as food and includes mushrooms, sprouts, and herbs (such as basil or cilantro).

1. Do you **only** grow produce for personal or on-farm consumption?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is **Yes**, then you are not covered by the Produce Safety Rule.  
If your answer is **No**, go to question 2.



# FSMA - Produce Safety Rule

1. Personnel qualifications and training
  2. Worker health and hygiene
- 

## 3. Agricultural water

- **Water used during growing season- NOT FINAL**
  - **Water used at harvest and post harvest- FINAL (Jan. 2023)**
- 

4. Biological soil amendments of animal origin and human waste
5. Domesticated and wild animals
6. Equipment, tools, buildings and sanitation
7. Growing, harvesting, packing and holding activities

# Water used during growing season

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- **Pending** on publication of final rule
- Encouraged to do an inspection of the agricultural water system at least once annually.

## FDA's proposed rule

- Water use risk assessments
- Water management plan





# Summary of changes in water used at harvest and post harvest for small fruit farms

NC STATE

EXTENSION

COUNTY CENTERS

TOPICS

GIVE NOW

NC Fresh Produce Safety

Meet Our Staff

Events

COVID-19 Resources for Fruit and Vegetable Growers

Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)  
Produce Safety Rule How Is Produce Classified Under the Produce Safety Rule? Exemptions ...

Online Learning Modules/ Módulos De Enseñanza  
Production and Post Harvest Water Testing and Sampling Análisis Y Muestreo De Agua Para La Producción Y Post Cosecha Soil Amendments ...

Good Agricultural Practices  
GAPs Information Audits and Plans Risk & Crisis Management ...

Growers  
Produce Quick Reference Guide for Food Hubs and Farmers Farmers Market Resources Production Considerations ...

Industry  
Pathogens Food Safety for Processors Industry Guidelines ...

Trainers  
Agent Resources Training Manuals Educational Resources

Spanish Resources  
Worker Resources Consumer Resources Reference Materials

Consumers  
Health and Wellness Educational Resources Foodborne Illness

Search

FDA Announces Changes to Harvest and Post-Harvest Ag Water: What Does This Mean for Small Fruit Farms and Packing Houses?

— Written By [Elena Rogers](#)

> ► en Español

FDA announced January 13, 2023 the end of the enforcement discretion period for requirements for water used during harvest and post-harvest in produce operations effective Jan. 26, 2023. This means that starting in 2023 during regular farm inspections to verify compliance with FSMA's Produce Safety Rule, “covered” farms will have to comply with the requirements described in this document. These inspections are conducted by the NCDA&CS Produce Safety Program. This document does not discuss any requirements from third party food safety audits or specific buyer requirements pertaining water use.

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Raspberry

Strawberries

Water Testing

A square QR code located on the right side of the page, below the article title and sharing options. It is a standard black and white matrix code used for quick access to digital content.



# Compliance dates

These changes affect “covered” farms **ONLY**.

1. Determine where the farm falls under the Produce Safety Rule.
2. Only after its determine that the farm is a “**covered**” farm then calculate average **produce sales for the past three years** to determine the compliance date.

## Compliance dates

Produce sales (average of last 3 years)	Compliance date
Over \$500,000	January 26, 2023
250,000 and \$500,000	January 26, 2024
Less than \$250,000	January 26, 2025

# What water does this apply to?

- Water used for handwashing during harvest
- Water used to clean and/or sanitize buckets and any other containers that are not single use and come in contact with the fruit in the field at the time of harvest
- Under special circumstances when fruit will be washed
- Water used to clean and sanitize packing lines and other food contact surfaces in packing houses
- Any water that is likely to come in contact with the fruit or food contact surfaces during and after harvest is also included.



# Overall requirements

1. Quality: No detectable generic E. Coli per 100 mL of water.
2. Annual inspection of the agricultural water system.
3. Maintain agricultural water sources and distribution systems.
4. If water treatments are used, the process must be monitored.
5. Monitor water quality when washing produce.



## Requirements based on water source

Public water system/ public water supply	Ground water - wells	Surface water- Creeks, springs, rivers
<p>No testing is required.</p> <p>Public Water System results or certificates of compliance that demonstrate that the water meets standard must be on file annually.</p>	<p>For untreated water: <b>Year 1:</b> Test 4 times during growing season OR over a 1-year period test 4 times.</p> <p><b>Year 2:</b> Test annually thereafter.</p> <p>If annual test fails to meet standard, resume testing four times per growing season.</p>	<p>Never use untreated surface water.</p> <p>If this is the only source, treat it before using it in harvest and post harvest operations.</p>

**If water testing is conducted the laboratory has to use one of these methods :**

1. EPA Method 1603
2. Method 1103.1
3. Method 1604
4. 9213 D
5. 9222 B followed by 9222G
6. D 5392-93
7. Hach Method 10029 for Coliforms
8. IDEXX Colilert Test Kit, but only if using IDEXX Quanti-Tray/2000 for quantification.
9. IDEXX Colilert-18 Test Kit, but only if using IDEXX Quanti-Tray/2000 for quantification.



## **If water treatment is used for the water source**

1. The method used (including physical treatment, an EPA-registered antimicrobial pesticide product, or other suitable method) must be effective.
2. Treatment must be delivered in a manner, and monitored at a frequency adequate, to ensure that the treated water is consistently safe and of adequate sanitary quality
3. Records must be kept
4. Don't have to test water if protocol and records are followed



# Agricultural Water System

- Conduct annual inspection of the source of agricultural water, the water distribution system, any building or structure that is part of the water distribution system (such as a well house, pump station, or shed), and any equipment used for application of agricultural water during growing, harvesting, packing, or holding activities.
- Conduct inspection at the beginning of the growing season and as needed.
- Consider: degree of protection of each water source, adjacent and nearby land use and likelihood of introduction of hazards to the water by another user before the water gets to you.

## **Maintain agricultural water sources and distribution systems**

- Adequately maintain all agricultural water sources to the extent they are under your control (such as wells).
- Maintenance includes regularly inspecting each source to identify any conditions that are likely to introduce hazards that can contaminate source or produce.
- Correct any significant deficiencies (e.g., repairs to well cap, well casing, sanitary seals, piping tanks and treatment equipment, and control of cross-connections); and keeping the source free of debris, trash, domesticated animals, and other possible sources of contamination.

# Water used during harvest and post harvest operations

## Records and recordkeeping

- Records pertaining to agricultural water system inspections
- Testing results including method used by the Lab
- Corrective actions
- If water treatment is conducted, records proving treatment is applied correctly
- Annual record from municipality/water company showing water is safe.



## Training for workers from Produce Safety Alliance



English  
Spanish  
Creole  
Hmong





# Key Questions for Regulators During Outbreak Investigations

## DEVELOPED BY A WORKGROUP OF THE IFPA FOOD SAFETY COUNCIL

**Objective:** The questions below may be helpful as a company that has been contacted by a regulator seeks to better understand a situation. These questions can be considered if a regulator/ investigator approaches a firm with a request for records or other suggestion of involvement in an outbreak.

This document is not intended to be a recall or regulatory visit policy or guide, but, instead is supplemental material for a firm's internal programs.





United States Department of Agriculture

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# **Produce GAPs Harmonized Food Safety Standard**

**February 8, 2021**

## **Audits in 2024**

**New format will be released before season starts for Harmonized and Harmonized +.**

**Workshops will be offered to go over changes.**



# Upcoming food safety events

- Cleaning and sanitation workshop
  - March 11, 2024 at Clinton, NC
- Produce Safety Alliance Training
  - March 21, 2024 at MHREC, Mills River, NC & Durham, NC
- Water systems workshop-
  - March 27, 2024 at Clinton, NC
  - April 17, 2024 at MHREC, Mills River, NC
- Environmental monitoring workshop- June 13, 2024  
MHREC, Mills River, NC

The screenshot displays the NC Fresh Produce Safety website. The header includes 'NC STATE' and 'EXTENSION' on the left, and 'COUNTY CENTERS', 'TOPICS', and 'GIVE NOW' on the right. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area features a large image of fresh produce (grapes, tomatoes, and bananas) with the title 'NC Fresh Produce Safety'. Below this, there is a sidebar with a red background containing links to 'Meet Our Staff', 'Events', 'Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)', 'Good Agricultural Practices', 'Growers', 'Industry', 'Trainers', 'Spanish Resources', 'Consumers', 'Glossary and FAQs', and 'Publications & Factsheets'. The main content area below the sidebar shows a calendar of events for January and February. The events listed are 'Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Mills River, NC' on January 17, 'Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Jacksonville, NC' on January 18, 'Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Rockingham, NC' on January 31, and 'Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Nashville, TN' on February 7. Each event entry includes the date, day of the week, time, and a '1 week away' indicator. Below the calendar, there is a 'News and Updates' section with three articles: 'Registration for the Produce Safety Rule Growers Training Courses in North Carolina', 'FSMA for Small Farms: Six', and 'Scholarships Available From the Rural Food Center'.

Month	Date	Day	Event	Time	Distance
JAN	17	WED	Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Mills River, NC	Wed 1/17 8:30am - 5pm	1 week away
JAN	18	THU	Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Jacksonville, NC	Thu 1/18 8:30am - 5pm	1 week away
JAN	31	WED	Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Rockingham, NC	Wed 1/31 8:30am - 5pm	3 weeks away
FEB	7	WED	Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Nashville, TN	Wed 2/7 8:30am - 5pm	4 weeks



# Contact Information

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