

Western Growers Reactions to FSMA Proposed Produce & Preventive Controls Rules

February 19, 2014



Farm Foundation



About Western Growers

- approx. 50% of the fresh fruits and vegetables
- 99% of the tree nuts
- 1/3 of the organic produce



Some Overarching Thoughts

- Every operation, regardless of scale, should have a food safety plan
- Rules should result in reduced need for multiple, redundant audits
- All operations should be covered by only one rule, rather than the fragmented rules- PC and Produce- under FSMA

PR - Subpart A: General Provisions

- Every operation should have a written food safety plan
- Definitions should be clear, concise and stand alone
- Ownership of product should not determine the rule to which one is subject
- An operation should be subject to either one rule or the other
- Apply uniformly to domestic and foreign operations

PR - Subpart B: General Requirements

Create greater flexibility by expanding the potential for alternative approaches

- Allow use beyond water and soil amendment
- Establish criteria to evaluate “same level of public protection”
- Provide expert review
- “Approve” alternatives
- Eliminate “meet same microbiological standards”

PR - Subpart C: Personnel Qualifications and Training

- Acknowledge existing training programs
- Separate training, education and experience
- Allow for individuals to demonstrate qualifications

PR - Subpart E: Agricultural water

- WG is not supportive of rote testing programs
- Instead, customized testing programs based on demonstrated control of source(s) & system

Critically, the rule needs to recognize that one size does not fit all and that different waters in different settings on different commodities may be acceptable with different standards

PR - Subpart F: Soil Amendments

- Discourage use of raw untreated manure
- Require composting of “yard trimmings;”
- Do not mandate invalid testing

PR – Subpart I: Animals

- Recognize varying levels of risk
- The bottom line is to protect against feces in food
- Producers should evaluate risk and act accordingly

PR - Subpart K: Growing, Harvesting, Packing, Holding

- Do not make washing mandatory
 - It is complicated
 - It may adversely affect many commodities

PR - Subpart P: Variances

- Variances are complicated
- Rationale and science may need to be developed
- Allow third parties to petition on behalf of crop or group

PR - Subpart Q: Compliance and Enforcement

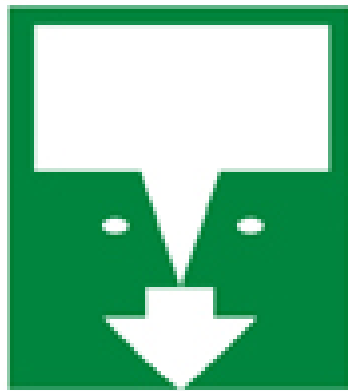
- Equivalent industry programs demonstrate compliance
- Focus on prevention
 - Use existing mechanisms
 - Develop guidance & tools
 - Prioritize risk

PC - Subpart B: Current GMP

- Reduce confusion between mandatory vs non-mandatory
- Delete *all* non-binding provisions
- Use separate “guidance” for recommended practices

PC - Subpart C: Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls

- On site - Food Safety Plan
- Facility Profile Database
 - Type
 - Products
 - Size
 - Schedule
- Should not include
 - Hazard analysis
 - Preventive controls
 - 3rd party audit
 - Training



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