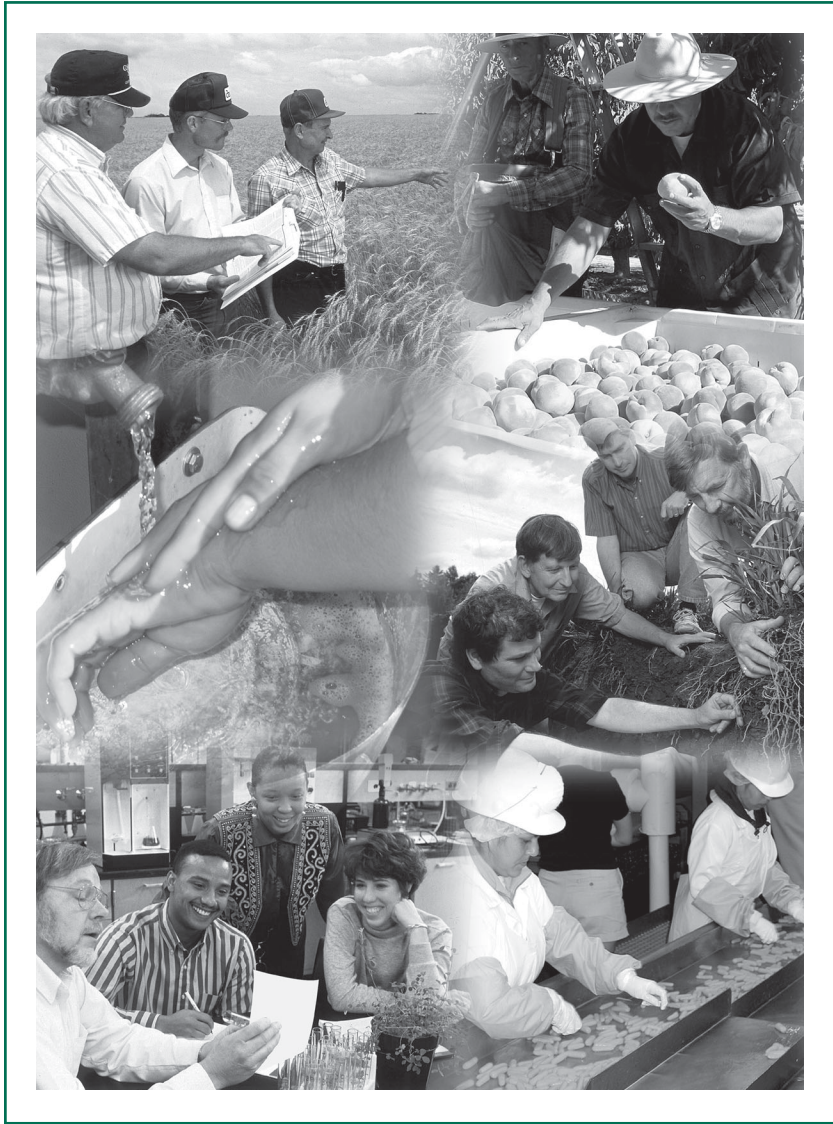


Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower Self Assessment of Food Safety Risks



Instructions

How to use this Grower Self Assessment

To most effectively use these worksheets:

1. Select which fields or commodities you will review. If you cannot decide which fields should be reviewed, start with a main field for produce production. It may be more sensible to evaluate a whole crop commodity or enterprise (e.g. fresh market cabbage production) if you have multiple fields of that specific crop. What is most important is to complete the assessment, so pick a field or commodity and begin.
2. These five worksheets apply to all growers and should be completed. These include:
 - Record Keeping
 - Worker Hygiene Training
 - Toilet and Handwashing Facilities
 - Farm Biosecurity
 - Crisis Management
3. Identify the other worksheets relevant to the field or commodity you are assessing by answering “Yes” or “No” to the questions in the tab “My Farm Assessment.” Here is an example.

Do You...	No	Yes	If Yes, proceed to tab and section listed.
...apply any crop protectant or foliar sprays to produce?	✓		Water Use
...harvest produce from the field for sale?		✓	Harvest Sanitation

In this case, you would complete the field sanitation section but not the water use section.

How to use this Grower Self Assessment (continued)

4. Turn to the first section you will need to review. Each section has an action plan provided at the end. These action plans in the assessment are for photocopying, so that they are available for future assessments. An extra set of action plans for each section should have been provided with this booklet so that you can start immediately. Here is an example of management areas that are assessed.

Harvest and Field Sanitation

Good Agricultural Practices

Practices Requiring Attention



Management Area	Best Practice	Minor Adjustments Needed	Concerns Exist; Examine Practice	Needs Improvement: Prioritize Changes Here
Grading and quality during harvest of crops	Workers are trained to avoid harvesting bruised or dropped fruit AND any produce with evidence of animal or bird feces or feeding marks.	Bruised or dropped fruit or crops with evidence of animal or bird feces or feeding may be harvested (e.g. by machine), but these are heat processed or pasteurized prior to sale.	Workers are told but not specifically trained to avoid bruised, dropped or feces contaminated produce which may result in occasional harvest of damaged pieces.	There are no standards or instructions to workers to avoid bruised or dropped fruit or produce with evidence of animal feces or feeding.
Washing and sanitation of harvest aids (e.g. knives, aprons, containers)	All harvest aids are washed, rinsed and sanitized at the start of each work session, and after breaks or as needed throughout the day.	All harvest aids are washed, rinsed and sanitized daily.	All harvest aids are washed, rinsed and sanitized once per week.	Harvest aids are not washed, rinsed or sanitized except at beginning of the season.

How to use this Grower Self Assessment (continued)

- For each management area, find the practice that most corresponds to your current practice in that management area and fill out the action plan. An example is provided below.
- After reviewing your practices, focus efforts to improve your management where your practices are in the “Examine Practice” or “Prioritize Changes Here” columns.

Work with your local Cooperative Extension Educators or agricultural consultants to design effective and economically feasible solutions to reduce risks in these areas.

- Place the completed action plans in the back pocket for easy and frequent reference.

Harvest and Field Sanitation Action Plan

Date: Sept. 30, 2003 Reviewer: Thomas Smith Field or Commodity: Lettuce

Management Area				Your Plans to Reduce Risks			
				Action for Improvement	Person Responsible	Estimated Cost	Target Date
Grading and quality during harvest of crops	✓				Field Manager		
Washing and sanitation of harvest aids (e.g. knives, aprons, containers)			✓	Wash all cutting knives and harvest crates at the end of each day with soap and water, so they are ready for the crew in the morning.	Crew Chief	\$10/day	Tomorrow

Much can be done to reduce microbial risks by implementing the GAPs presented in the following worksheets. By reviewing your practices, improving your management, and documenting your

changes, you will be able to provide evidence of your commitment to reducing microbial risks to fruits and vegetables on your farm.