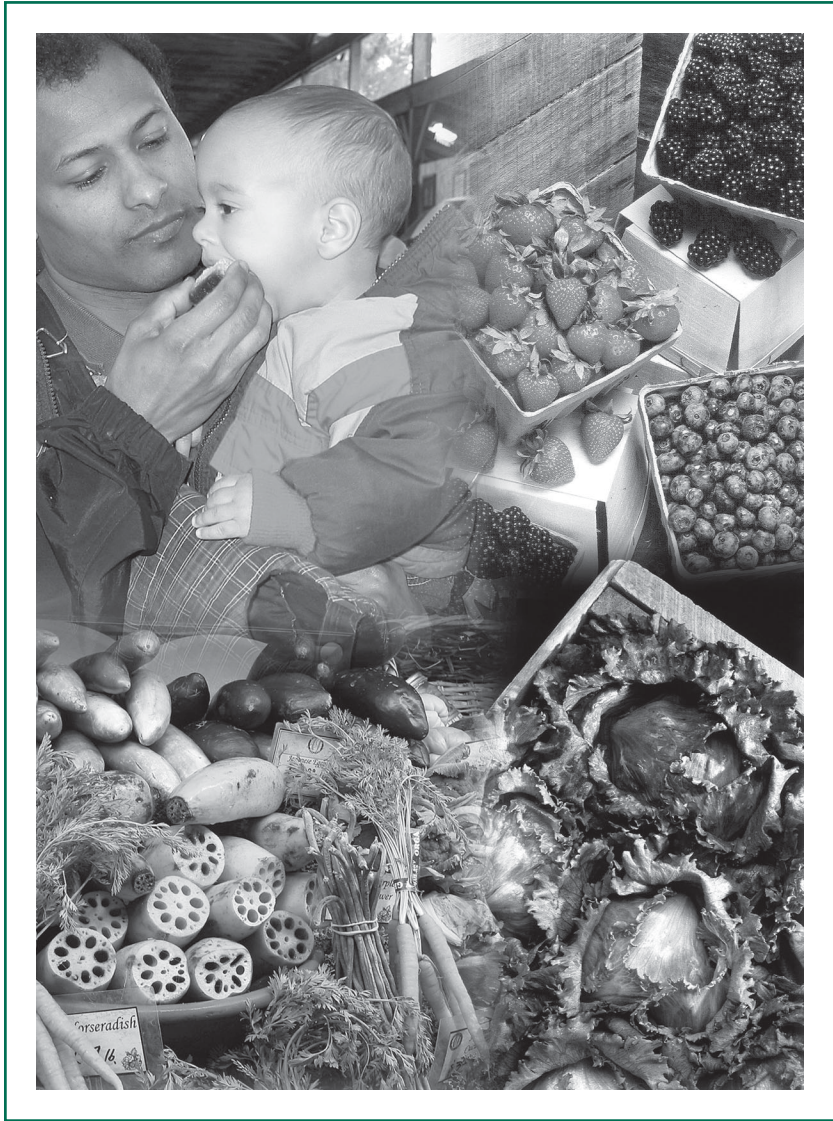


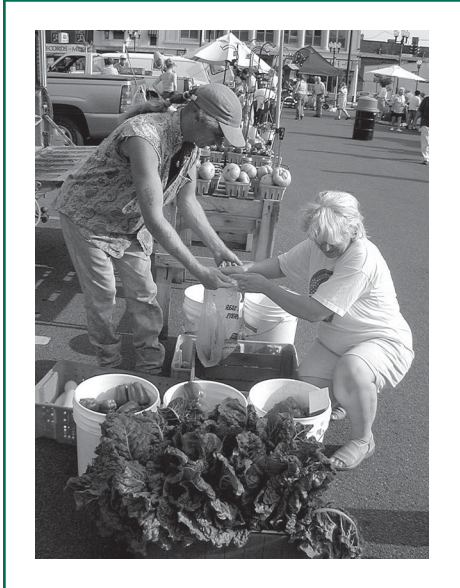
## Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower Self Assessment of Food Safety Risks



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# Direct Marketing

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## Direct Marketing

Whether growers establish a farm market on their farm, travel to a local city's farm market, or establish community supported agriculture (CSA), many fruit and vegetable growers have found that direct marketing to consumers is a profitable and rewarding way to sell produce. Bringing the consumer in direct contact with the grower allows for

exchange of information that does not usually occur in the produce section of a large retail store. Many growers allow customers to sample produce before they purchase it. Since direct marketing provides many unique experiences, it is important to consider the unique food safety risks that may exist.

First and foremost, all growers, especially those that are directly selling to consumers, must remember they are food handlers. Hand washing and good hygiene are very important to protecting the fruits and vegetables that are grown, harvested, and sold directly to consumers. Providing clean toilets and well-stocked hand washing facilities at direct marketing locations encourages the employees and customers to wash their hands.

If farm market growers provide edible samples to their customers, special attention must

be paid to the preparation and storage of these samples. Samples must be prepared on clean and sanitized surfaces, using clean and sanitized utensils. The samples must then be covered and stored under refrigeration or on ice. If samples are displayed at room temperature, they must be thrown out if not consumed in a few hours. Many states have very strict laws regarding the preparation and storage of samples, so growers must review their local laws if they choose to provide samples. Other states do not allow any sampling at farm markets. Carefully consider which commodities you offer as samples since some produce offers greater microbial risks than others.

Direct marketing can be a great experience for everyone involved. Farm markets and CSA are very dependent on people returning week after week, so it is important to adopt GAPs that reduce the likelihood that a foodborne illness outbreak will occur. By reviewing practices and implementing appropriate GAPs, growers who direct market will protect their own business as well as the businesses of all those that sell directly to consumers.



# Direct Marketing

## Good Agricultural Practices

## Practices Requiring Attention



Management Area	Best Practice	Minor Adjustments Needed	Concerns Exist; Examine Practice	Needs Improvement: Prioritize Changes Here
	All workers practice proper handwashing and wash their hands before work, before and after meals, eating, and toilet use.			
<b>Location of toilet and handwashing facilities</b>	Toilets and handwashing facilities are readily available for all employees and customers.			No toilets or handwashing facilities are available for employees or customers.
	Toilets and handwashing facilities are cleaned before each market day and stocked with water, soap, and single-use paper towels. A cleaning record is kept by market manager that indicates time, date, and individual who performed the work.		Toilet and handwashing facilities are cleaned at the beginning of the market season, but cleaning and stocking are not regularly scheduled.	
<b>Domesticated animals on the farm</b>	Pets, including farm animals, are never permitted in packing areas or farm markets.	Pets and farm animals are excluded from packing areas or farm stands during operations, but have access to these areas during off-hours		Pets and farm animals roam farm markets and packing areas freely, at any time.

# Direct Marketing

## Good Agricultural Practices

## Practices Requiring Attention



Management Area	Best Practice	Minor Adjustments Needed	Concerns Exist; Examine Practice	Needs Improvement: Prioritize Changes Here
<b>Garbage containers</b>	Covered garbage containers are readily available for customers to dispose of unwanted samples, used single service items, or other trash.	Garbage containers are provided <b>BUT</b> they are not covered.		No garbage containers are provided for customers.
<b>Produce used for samples</b>	Produce used for samples is always washed in potable, cool water prior to preparation.		Produce used for samples is usually washed in potable, cool water, but not if samples run out and more need to be cut during the market.	Produce used for samples is never washed in cool water.
<b>Food handler training for cutting produce</b>	Everyone preparing samples or serving samples is trained to properly wash their hands and use clean sanitized utensils. Clean, disposable gloves are worn so there is no bare hand contact with cut, ready-to-eat produce.		Everyone preparing samples or serving samples is trained to properly wash their hands and use clean, sanitized utensils <b>BUT</b> there is some bare hand contact with cut, ready-to-eat produce.	No training is provided for those preparing or serving samples.
<b>Utensils used for cutting samples</b>	All utensils used for cutting samples including the cutting surface and knives, are washed, rinsed, and sanitized prior to use.		All utensils used for cutting samples are wash and rinsed but rarely sanitized prior to use.	Utensil washing and sanitizing is not a priority and often samples are cut with a pocket knife or other readily available object.

# Direct Marketing

## Good Agricultural Practices

## Practices Requiring Attention



Management Area	Best Practice	Minor Adjustments Needed	Concerns Exist; Examine Practice	Needs Improvement: Prioritize Changes Here
<b>Storage of cut samples</b>	Cut samples are stored in food grade containers and kept on ice or in a cool ice chest at or below 41°F until they are served.		Cut samples are stored in food grade containers <b>BUT</b> storage temperatures are not known or monitored.	Cut samples are stored in garbage bags or other non-food grade containers and are not stored on ice or are stored above 41°F.
<b>Serving samples</b>	Samples are served in a covered container <b>AND</b> on ice. If samples are not held cold, they are disposed of after four hours. Any leftover items at the end of the day should be discarded.		Samples are served in a covered container <b>BUT</b> samples are not held cold and the holding time is not monitored to assure they are disposed of after four hours.	Samples are served in an uncovered container which attracts insects and are not held on ice allowing growth of potential human pathogens.
<b>Single service items for samples</b>	Single service items such as toothpicks or plastic utensils are provided for customers who choose to taste the samples.			No single service items are provided with the samples and customers use their bare hands to sample the produce.
<b>Sale of low acid canned foods</b>	Low acid canned foods such as vegetables, meat, and fish are not sold unless they are processed at an approved, low acid facility following a scheduled process by a certified operator.			Low acid canned foods that were produced in the home are sold directly to consumers.



# Direct Marketing Action Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Field or Commodity: \_\_\_\_\_

Management Area					Your Plans to Reduce Risks			
					Action for Improvement	Person Responsible	Estimated Cost	Target Date
Handwashing practices of farm market and CSA employees								
Location of toilet and handwashing facilities								
Maintenance and cleaning of toilets and handwashing facilities								
Domesticated animals on the farm								
Garbage containers								

# Direct Marketing Action Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Field or Commodity: \_\_\_\_\_

Management Area					Your Plans to Reduce Risks			
					Action for Improvement	Person Responsible	Estimated Cost	Target Date
Produce used for samples								
Food handler training for cutting produce								
Utensils used for cutting samples								
Storage of cut samples								
Serving samples								



# Direct Marketing Action Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Field or Commodity: \_\_\_\_\_

Management Area					Your Plans to Reduce Risks			
					Action for Improvement	Person Responsible	Estimated Cost	Target Date
Single service items for samples								
Sale of low acid canned foods								