



Nevada's Available Food Safety Programs

Plant Industry Division

Introduction

A Farm to School grant was received by the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) to address food safety barriers present when trying to incorporate local products from producers or school gardens into the school meal program.

Accomplishments since the start of the grant:

- A School Garden Food Safety Guidelines document has been established. The document is available online, and individual/group trainings are available upon request.
- Sub-contracted with University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE) to offer training on Good Agriculture Practices (GAP).
- Two new inspections are available to producers and school gardens (GAP & School Garden Inspection (SCI))

GAP Audit Program

This program is a United States Department of Agriculture voluntary program that is available through NDA. It is used to verify that growing and handling practices involve GAP in order to help minimize microbial hazards in the garden. Preventative measures are taken during the growing, harvesting and post harvesting phases of production.

GAP is voluntary and very comprehensive. It is better suited for large gardens/farms that have someone to maintain records (FFA gardens, producers).

GAP Audit requires the following:

- Garden Coordinator or Farm Safety Manager is familiar with GAPs and has been designated to implement and oversee the operation's established food safety plan.
- A **written food safety plan** is in place and based on GAPs.
- **Water tests** are required for hand washing, drinking and irrigation water. If municipal is the source for all water used, a copy of the water tests can be requested.
- **Records, policies and documents** are available to verify that every component of the food safety plan is being implemented.
- **Operation Visual Assessment** – The auditor will visually confirm that GAPs are being performed and the policies outlined in the food safety plan are being implemented.
- A minimum passing score of **80 percent on the GAP Audit Checklist if no immediate food safety risks are found/observed is required.** The Audit Checklist available at <http://agri.nv.gov/GAP/>

School Garden Inspection:

New NDA program created by working with Washoe County Health District. Outreach is performed to the school garden site on the new School Garden Food Safety Guidelines in order to help **inform garden coordinators on food safety practices.** Garden coordinators then **evaluate their garden and create a food safety plan.** After the food safety plan is in place, they contact NDA for an inspection.

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School Garden Inspection includes the following:

- Verification that a food safety plan is in place. Inspector will not go through the entire food safety plan because that would fall under a GAP inspection. The inspector **simply verifies that a food safety plan is in place.**
- Some form of documentation available to **verify that the food safety plan is being implemented**, whether it's a school garden checklist, harvest log, composting temperatures log, hygiene training log or all of the above.
- Observation that no immediate food safety risks exist. Examples: animal dropping throughout the garden site, raw manure was applied to ready-to-harvest products, using gray water, etc.
- If garden site does not pass inspection, they will be referred to areas they can receive information on how to resolve the food safety risk.
- **Washoe County Health or State Health may require this inspection if students will be consuming or selling the produce.** If the garden does not pass the inspection they may not be considered an "approved source."

How to prepare for inspections?

Attending a GAP course will help you prepare for both inspections. GAP is much more comprehensive and may be too much for a garden site that is simply composed of two boxed beds. Helpful information is provided during the GAP training. This training will discuss the biology of food-borne pathogens and various areas that can lead to contamination.

School Garden Food Safety training is more condensed and based on GAPs. This training is more specific to school gardens and school meal preparation. Trainings will be held upon request to help school gardens prepare for an inspection or simply increase garden coordinators'/students' knowledge regarding food safety practices.

In addition, the school garden food safety guidelines will provide information on:

- Health requirements regarding hygiene practices, permitted kitchens for food preparation, etc.
- Coordinating with your food service directors in order to determine:
 - What can be incorporated into school meals.
 - What documentation Food Service Directors (FSD) need in order to consider food safe for student consumption.
 - How and when FSDs want the produce harvested.
 - How FSDs want produce dropped off.
 - Coordinating with FSD to highlight a fruit/vegetable that is being served and how the same crops were grown by students in the garden.

Producer and produce vender certificate:

405 South 21st St.
Sparks, NV 89431

2300 East St. Louis Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89104

4780 East Idaho St.
Elko, NV 89801



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Producer certificates are issued by the NDA to farmers that are selling crops of their own production. Producer certificates are required for honey, eggs of domestic poultry and all crops produced in Nevada in their natural and unprocessed state. Produce vendor certificates are required in Nevada to sell produce not grown by that vendor or produce that is grown in another state and brought into Nevada for sale. This NDA program is not related to food safety.

- Verifies point of origin. If you claim to have grown tomatoes, melons, or other produce, NDA verified that those plants and relative quantities were actually growing at your site.
- Farmers market managers at Nevada certified markets may request to see your producer certificate before allowing you to sell at their market.

Contact Information:

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GAP website: <http://agri.nv.gov/GAP/>

School Garden Food Safety website: <http://agri.nv.gov/Plant/FTS-FSP/FTShome/>

Nevada Farm to School website: <http://www.farmentoschool.org/NV/>