

Why Not Start Now?

- Increase Consumer Demand
- Increase Market Access
- Lower Potential Food Safety Risks on Your Farm

NDA Farmer Assistance Program

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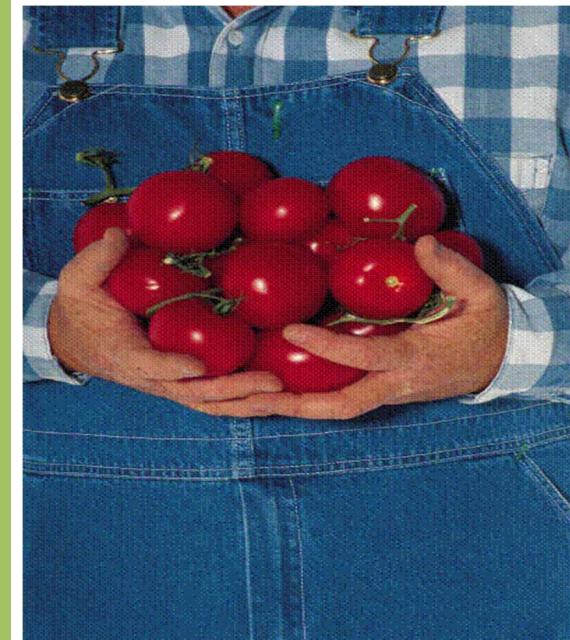
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The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
Provided Funding to support this project.

Farmer Assistance Program

Funding and Resources to
Keep Produce Safe on the
Farm



Grow it With Care



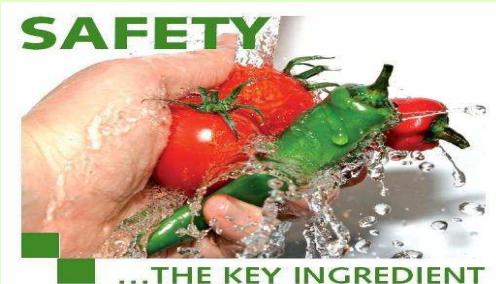
Good Agriculture Practices

Who : Do you want to increase your sales? Protect your business and customers? The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) is offering financial assistance for producers wishing to participate in Good Agriculture Practices.

What: The department was awarded USDA funding to provide cost-share assistance through a voluntary program which helps producers reduce food safety risks through the use of Good Agriculture Practices and Good Handling Practices.

When: Contact Ashley Jeppson at ajeppson@agri.nv.gov or 775-353-3675 to determine current funding availability!

Why: Prevention is the best tool when it comes to food safety. In an effort to help strengthen Nevada's Produce Industry NDA is taking proactive steps to provide the tools and resources producers need to meet industry based standards.



Keeping Produce Safe on The Farm a Partnership with Producers in Food Safety Development

What is Good Agriculture Practices and what does it mean to me?

Legislation introduced in the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) aims to ensure the U.S. food supply is safe by shifting the focus from responding to contamination to preventing it. In response the USDA Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program began offering a voluntary independent audit of produce suppliers throughout the production and supply chain.

The Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) audits focus on best agricultural practices to verify that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored in the safest manner possible to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards. The audits verify adherence to industry recognized food safety practices and recommendations made in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's [Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables](#).

In the GAP program the farm operation develops its own safety plan that follows recommended practices. Voluntary audits are performed to ensure compliance of their operations plan. Today there exists an array of food safety resources through education awareness and food safety development training that is available to farm operations who want to become GAP certified.

State Departments of Agriculture have become a key resource for small to mid-size farms in becoming GAP/GHP certified. States are, through the use of cooperative agreements with USDA, staffing certified inspectors to perform the verifications of these operations to help minimize potential food safety risks.

Nevada's Farmers Assistance Program

Produce operations of all sizes are encouraged to participate one size can fit all!

The Nevada Department of Agriculture has partnered with University Extension to offer an education and verification program to help Nevada Producers become certified in Good Agriculture Practices.

The Department is excited to announce it was awarded funding to provide cost-share assistance through the new "Farmers Assistance Program"; a voluntary program that encourages producers to keep produce safe by adopting good agriculture practices . The program will off-set the costs to learn and participate in the GAP/GHP program. Reimbursements will depend on funding availability but often range from 75-100% of GAP certification costs.

FSMA legislation currently exempts small operations with lower gross income thresholds. However, buyers often require a GAP Audit or food safety program from growers in order to sell their produce. Nevada is taking a proactive approach in order to ensure that Nevada produce operations of all sizes have every advantage to be ahead of the curve. Bordering states already have these programs established and the NDA wants to have resources available for our producers to compete in the marketplace. The demand for Good Agriculture Practices is on the rise and food safety begins on the farm.

Find out today how you can start to build your own farm safety plan and implement GAPs.