



Agricultural Marketing Service
Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Update on Produce Food Safety Activities

***North Carolina Fresh Produce
Safety Task Force Meeting***

September 8 & 9, 2010

Raleigh, NC





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Fruit and Vegetable Programs



Kenneth S Petersen
Audit Programs Coordinator
Fresh Products Branch
Washington DC



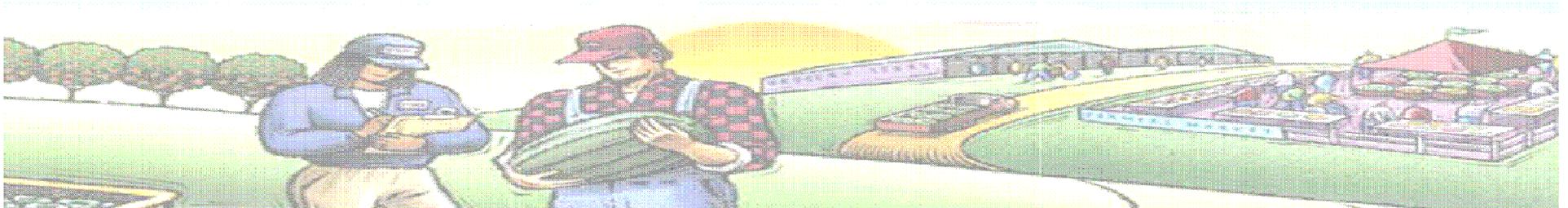


Agricultural Marketing Service

Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Agricultural Marketing Service

- Facilitates the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international marketplace.
- Develops voluntary standards and administers Federal Marketing Orders and Agreements.
- Provides independent third party inspection and auditing services.
- Non regulatory agency in regards to Food Safety (FDA & FSIS).



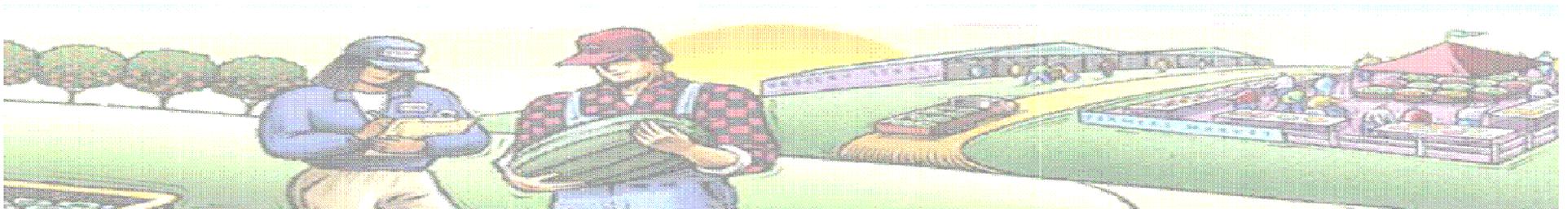


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Fruit and Vegetable Programs

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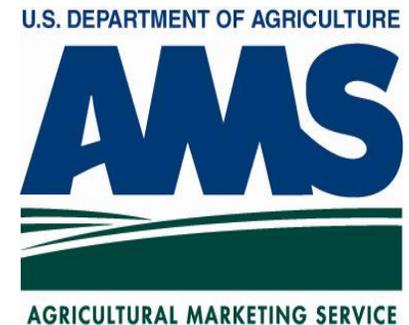
Fruit and Vegetable Programs

- Provides inspection and auditing services to both the fresh and processed fruit and vegetable industry.
- Works in cooperation with **state departments of agriculture** to provide these services.



Fruit and Vegetable Programs Food Safety Activities

- Collaboration with other Federal Agencies
- Audit Verification Programs
- Education and Outreach

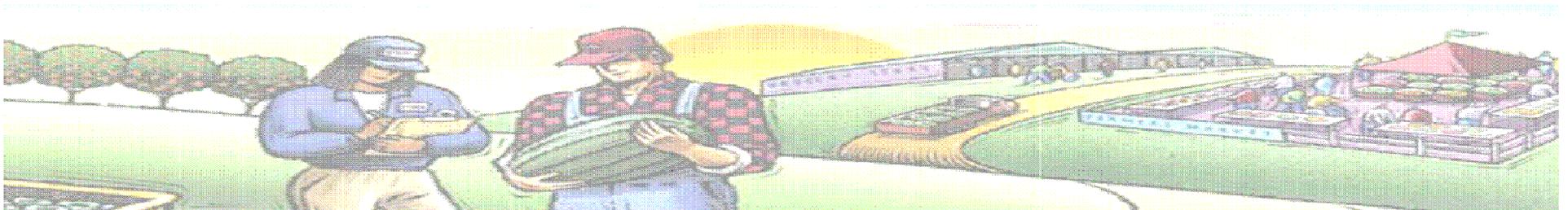




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Agency Collaboration

- Leanne Skelton, Chief of Fresh Products Branch on long term detail assignment with FDA assisting drafting Produce Safety Rules.
 - Travelled across country listening sessions
 - Liaison between USDA AMS & FDA activities





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Agency Collaboration

- Draft of Produce Safety Rule from FDA expected mid 2011
- Four Components
 - Regulation
 - Education & Outreach
 - Research
 - Compliance & Enforcement (USDA Involvement?)

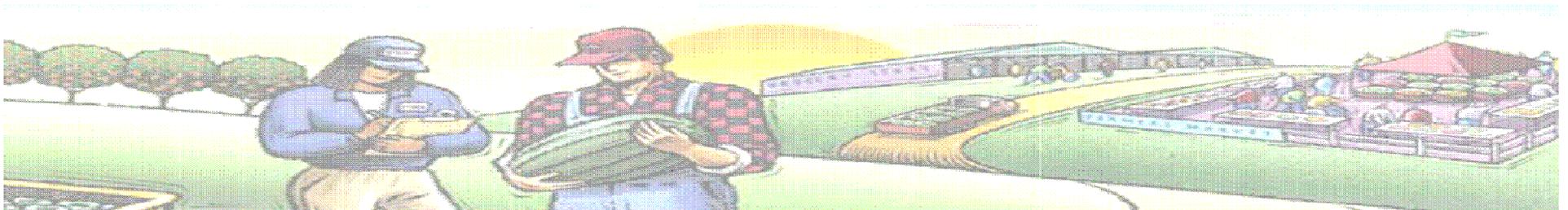




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Audit Verification Programs

- USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit Verification Program
 - Commodity Specific Audit Programs
 - Leafy Greens (State Marketing Agreements)
 - Tomatoes (California Tomato Farmers Program)
 - Mushrooms (M-GAP Audit Program)



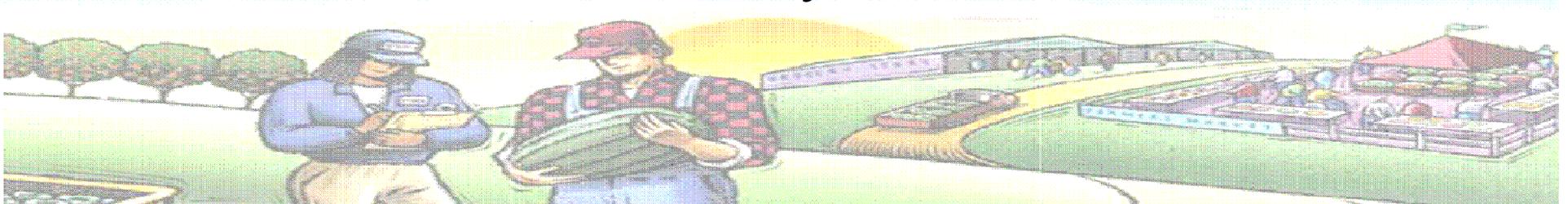


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Audit Verification Programs

USDA GAP&GHP Program

- Established at industry request
- Voluntary, competitively priced user fee
- Verifies participant's efforts to minimize microbial hazards in fresh fruits and vegetables
- Majority of audits performed by state personnel trained and licensed by USDA.

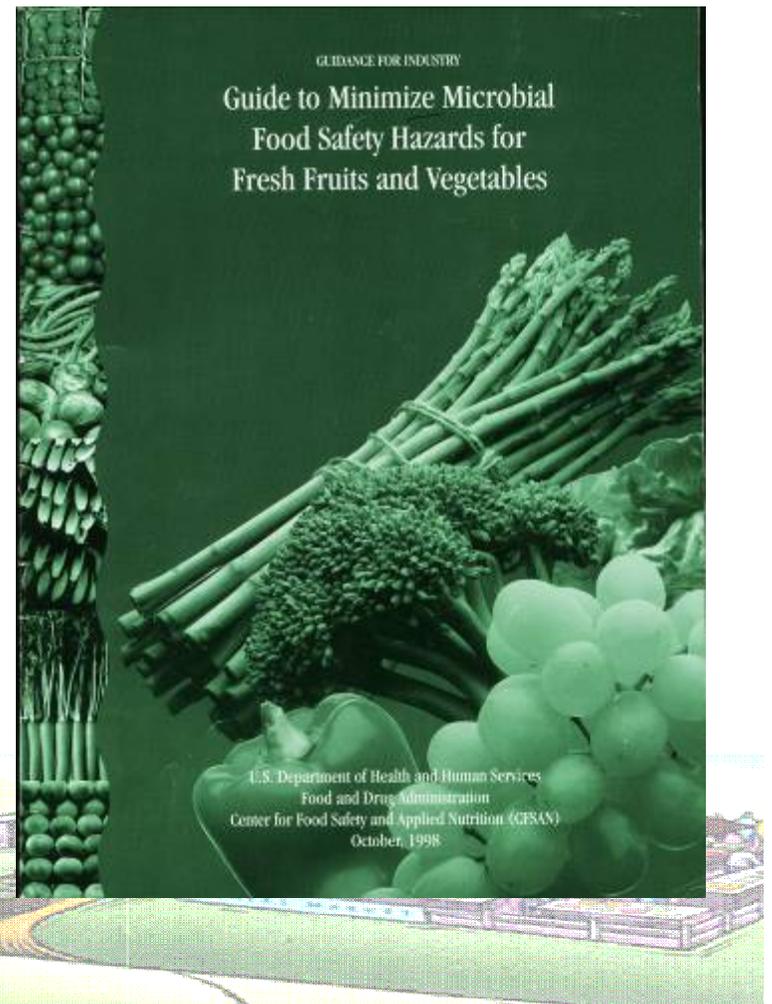




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GAP & GHP Audit Program

- USDA's Audit program is based on established scientific principles and utilizes the Food Drug Administration's (FDA) guidance document
- Published in October 1998

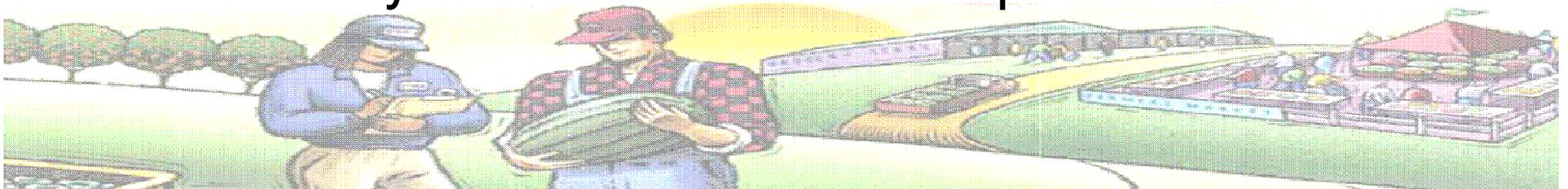




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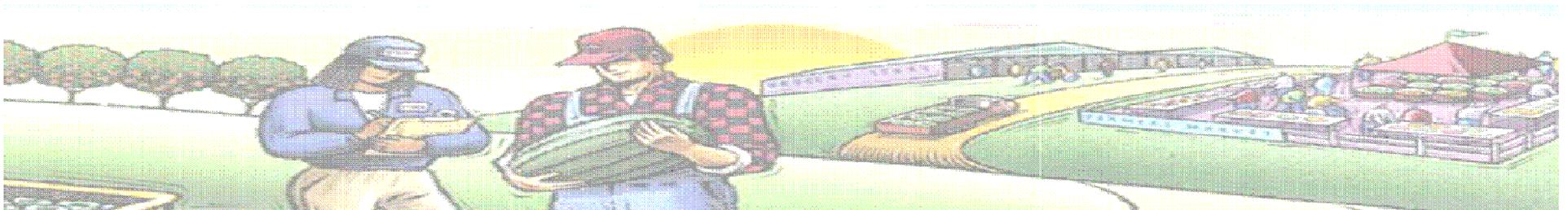
Potential National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

- Spring 2009, Leafy Greens Industry petitioned USDA to establish a National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement
- Fall 2009, USDA held 7 hearings across country to determine need
- USDA currently reviewing proposal and hearing testimony to determine next steps



GAP & GHP Audit Program

- USDA GAP & GHP audits are a requirement for all fresh fruit and vegetable purchases by the USDA, AMS, Commodity Procurement Branch. These purchases typically go into the domestic feeding programs such as the school lunch program. Not a requirement of farm to school purchases.





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Grading, Certification and Verification

Fresh Produce Audit Verification Program

With the increasing focus on good agricultural practices to verify that farms are producing fruits and vegetables in the safest manner possible, third party audits are being utilized by the retail and food service industry to verify their suppliers are in conformance to specific agricultural best practices. Since 1999, the Agricultural Marketing Service has been actively involved with the produce industry offering auditing services throughout the food chain to verify that best practices are being followed.

AMS, in partnership with state departments of agriculture, offers a voluntary, audit based program that verifies adherence to the recommendations made in the Food and Drug Administration's [Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables](#).

The Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices Audit Verification Program is broken down into three major sections: Good Agricultural Practices which examines farm practices; Good Handling Practices which concentrates on packing facilities, storage facilities and wholesale distribution centers; and Food Defense protocols utilized throughout the food chain. In addition to this program, AMS provides oversight for the Leafy Green Marketing Agreements in effect in California and Arizona, along with the California Tomato Growers Cooperative, each with specific best practices criteria that their members can be audited against.

List of Participating Companies arranged:

- [By State](#)
- [By Commodity](#)

Resources

- [USDA Audit Checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- [USDA Audit Score Sheet \(PDF\)](#)
- [Client Checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- [Client Scoresheet \(PDF\)](#)
- [Sliced Apple Audit Specification \(PDF\)](#)

Media Help

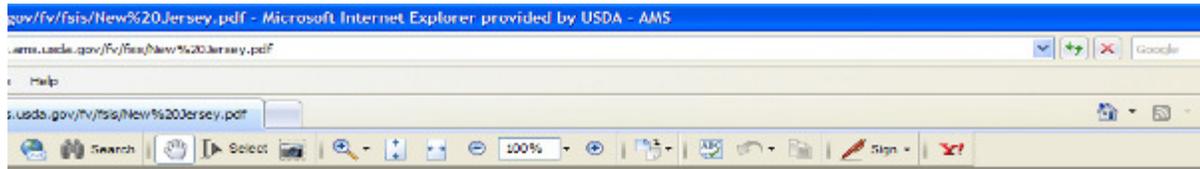
- [Download Adobe Acrobat](#)

Website shows farms & facilities that have successfully passed an audit. It is broken down by state and commodity.



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USDA Website



**USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
GAP/GHP Audit Verification Program
New Jersey**

The following table shows companies that have successfully passed an initial audit under the voluntary Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices for the scopes and commodities shown. Dates in a particular column indicate that the participant demonstrated an acceptable level of adherence with the Food and Drug Administration's "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables." The audit results are valid for one (1) year from the date shown, and are validated through the use of unannounced audit(s) throughout the growing/packing season. "N/A" means that process was not audited.

Company	Address	City, State	Farm Review Part 1	Field Harvest Packing Part 2	House Packing Part 3	Storage & Transportation Part 4	Traceback Part 5	Wholesale Distribution Center / Terminal Warehouses Part 6	Traceback A Part 6A	Commodities Covered by Audit
Eastern Fresh Growers Inc	340 Sayers Neck Rd	Cedarville, New Jersey	n/a	n/a	n/a	5/30/2007	5/30/2007	n/a	n/a	Asparagus, Romaine Lettuce, Iceberg Lettuce
Fresh Wave, The	1404 East Oak Rd	Vineland, New Jersey	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7/20/2007	n/a	Fruits and Vegetables
Gloucester County Packing	535 Glassboro Rd	Woodbury, NJ	n/a	n/a	8/28/2007	8/28/2007	n/a	n/a	n/a	Potatoes
Hersel Farms	Box 150, 984 Tuckahoe Rd	Milnsy, New Jersey	11/20/2007	11/20/2007	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Cabbage, Collard Greens
M. D'Ottavio Produce	P.O. Box	Minotola	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5/22/2007	n/a	Fruits and

Downloadable .pdf files for each commodity/state showing individual farm/facilities and the audit scopes.

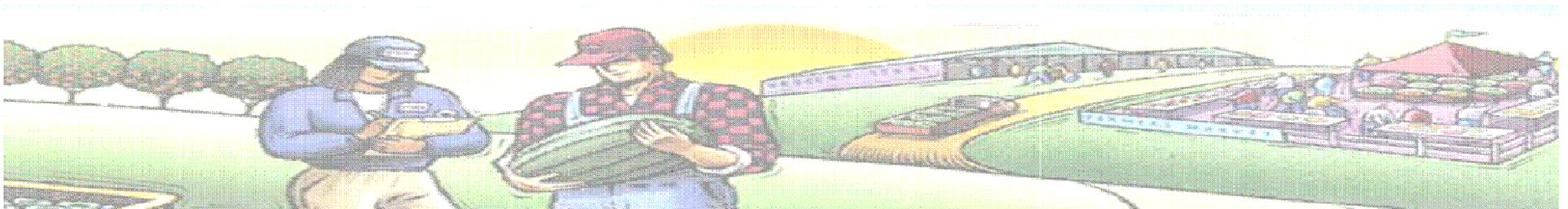


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GAPs Harmonization Initiative

- UFPA Food Safety and Technology Council
- Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards
 - ~90% of information on GAP audits the same
 - Formation of Technical Working Group to Harmonize GAP Standards

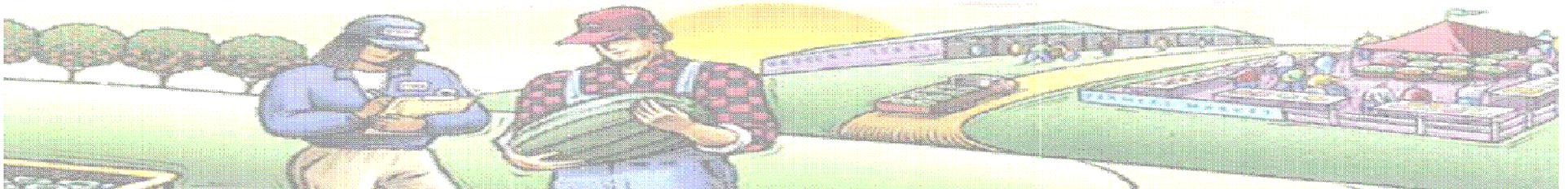




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GAPs Harmonization Initiative

- First Meeting November 2009
- Met 2 days each month in locations across country, open to anyone who wished to participate.
- 14 GAP Standards included in review process (including USDA audit)
- Final Draft being presented to Steering Committee in September 2010

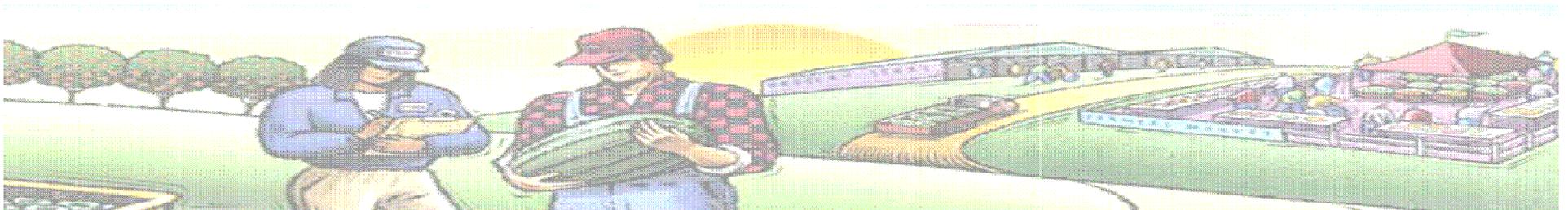




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2nd Edition Food Safety Practices for the Fresh Tomato Supply Chain

- Tomato Industry led initiative to develop “best practices” for the safe production, harvesting and marketing throughout the supply chain
- USDA AMS participated in the development of this document and audit protocol



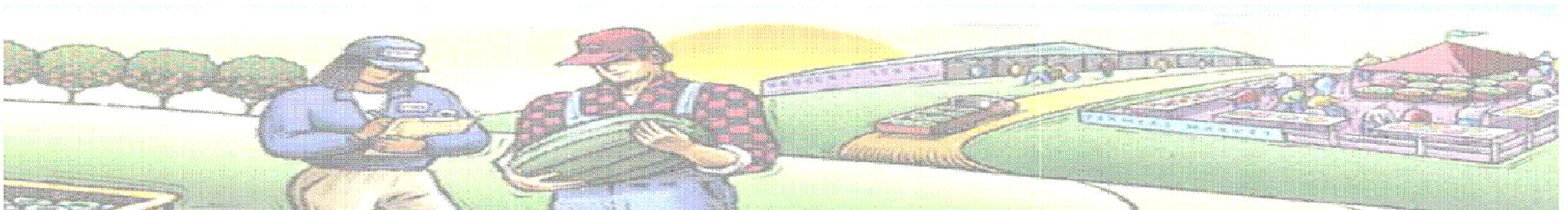


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Education & Outreach

- Produce Safety University
 - Collaborative effort between Ag Marketing Service and Food & Nutrition Service
 - 3 pilot classes in 2010 training approximately 70 people from across the country





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Education & Outreach

- Produce Safety University
 - Training of State & District School Directors on Produce Safety considerations in procurement of fruits and vegetables
 - Importance of GAPs
 - Understanding the food chain
 - Qualified Supplier Program





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Pilot Programs

- Targeted to small farmers
 - Provide training session and tools needed to complete food safety plan prior to audit
 - Alternative methods of GAP certification

