USDA
Specialty Crops Inspection Division
Audit Verification Programs

NGFN National Hub Collaboration
March 2014
Raleigh, North Carolina
Donna Burke-Fonda, Assistant Branch Chief
Audit Services Branch, Specialty Crops Inspection Division
Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

• Facilitates the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international marketplaces

• Develops voluntary standards

• Administers Federal Marketing Orders and Agreements
Agricultural Marketing Service

• Administers the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA)

• Provides independent third-party inspection and audit services

• Non regulatory agency in regards to food safety
  – Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates fruits and vegetables, and seafood
  – USDA, Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) regulates meat and poultry
The USDA GAP & GHP Audit Program

- Established in 2001 at industry request
- Voluntary, competitively priced user fee program
- Verifies participant’s efforts to minimize microbial hazards in fresh fruits and vegetables
Audit Program Development

- USDA’s audit programs are based on established scientific principles and utilizes the FDA’s guidance document
- Published in October 1998
Audit Program Development

Additional FDA Guidance Documents:

- Fresh Cut Fruits & Vegetables
- Lettuce & Leafy Greens
- Melons
- Fresh Tomatoes

To obtain copies of FDA guidance documents: [http://www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)
Audits Types Conducted

- Generic USDA GAP&GHP Audit
- Produce GAPs Harmonized Food Safety Audit
Audits Types Conducted

• CA & AZ Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement
• Tomato Food Safety Audit Protocol
• Mushroom GAP
• Cantaloupe Audits
Audits Types Conducted

• Which audit do you choose?
• Often decided by your customer
• The commodity or process will also influence your selection
Audit Program - Prerequisites

• Must have implemented a food safety program
• Must have a designated person(s) to oversee implementation of program
Website lists farms & facilities that have successfully passed an audit. It is broken down by state and commodity.
Downloadable PDF report for each commodity/state showing individual farm/facilities and the audit scopes.
Audits Performed

USDA GAP&GHP Audits

SCI Division Audit Verification Services
Audit Program - Alternatives

The traditional USDA GAP & GHP Audit Program requires:

- One Audit – One Farm
- Certification goes to audited farm (auditee)
- Auditee is responsible for:
  - Developing food safety plan
  - Performing risk assessments for water, soil, wildlife, etc.
  - Training employees
  - Payment for audit
Audit Program - Alternatives

Another option is the coordinated audit request

• A group of producers with similar commodities or processes establish timing for multiple audits

• Auditor’s travel costs are shared by the group

• Individual auditees may still be responsible for same items stated earlier
A third option is the USDA Group GAP Audit Program, which involves:

- One System Audit – One Group
- USDA certification goes to Group
- Group can take responsibility for developing food safety plan and training, performing risk assessments, and payment
- Requires Group to develop a Quality Management System
Questions?

Donna Burke-Fonda
dburkefonda@ams.usda.gov
202-690-0628

www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp