

Soil Summits to be held in December 2017 and January 2018

Join us for an engaging 1.5 day Soil Summit either in Houston, TX (Dec. 12-13, 2017) or Atlanta, GA (January 21-22, 2018). The first Soil Summit was hosted in March 2017 in Geneva, NY. The Summits provide opportunities for growers and others in the produce industry to provide feedback to the FDA about their use of Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin (BSAAO), including raw manure, and how they see their practices impacting the implementation of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule.



Why are we having Soil Summits?

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has RESERVED part of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule regarding the application intervals for untreated BSAAO that was published in the Federal Register on November 27, 2015. Marking this section as RESERVED was as a result of stakeholder concerns with application intervals in the proposed rule. The FDA is conducting additional research, working with other researchers, and working to conduct a formal risk assessment. The Soil Summits are designed to allow growers and others in the produce industry the opportunity to provide information and insights that can inform this process. This will ensure FDA has a good understanding of how untreated BSAAO are used on produce farms and the challenges growers face on implementing practices to reduce risks.

Who should attend a Soil Summit?

Produce growers, compost producers, extension educators, researchers, and others interested in reducing risks associated with the use of untreated BSAAO should attend a Soil Summit to gain a better understanding of current FDA research and risk assessment efforts. Participants will also have the opportunity to provide feedback to inform the RESERVED section of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule standards included in Subpart F - Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin and Human Waste. Participants will be actively engaged in break-out groups to identify benefits and risks associated with using untreated BSAAO as well as the barriers to transitioning to treated BSAAO.

What will happen during the Soil Summits?

The Summits will begin by setting the stage with presentations by the FDA on current efforts to conduct additional research and a risk assessment that will inform the FSMA Produce Safety Rule standards included in Subpart F - Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin and Human Waste. After these foundational presentations, the Soil Summit will move to facilitated break-out sessions that require participants to engage with other participants in discussing the benefits and challenges of raw manure use, transitioning to use of composted manure when possible, and identifying management strategies to minimize food safety risks associated with the use of all soil amendments. All break-out sessions will be summarized and a final summary report will be generated.

What are the goals of the Soil Summits?

The key goal is to provide members of the produce industry an opportunity to share their thoughts, concerns, and practices related to the use of untreated BSAAO. The break-out topics are focused on facilitating discussions to identify barriers to using/producing compost while identifying management strategies, resources, and additional support necessary to assist growers in minimizing food safety risks on the farm, especially when using raw manure.

Additional goals include:

- Provide clarification on the FSMA Produce Safety Rule standards included in Subpart F - Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin and Human Waste
- Inform educators, produce growers, and researchers of FDA risk assessment and research initiatives that are under way
- Provide the opportunity for the produce industry to discuss current on-farm uses of untreated BSAAO, including raw manure, and brainstorm on topics that can help reduce risks, including resources necessary to support produce growers
- Discuss how to address situations where compost practices may not be feasible for the farm, including risk management strategies for the use of raw manure

How do you register for a Soil Summit?

More information and online registration can be found at:

- [South Central Soil Summit in Houston, December 12 & 13, 2017](#)
- [Southeastern Soil Summit in Atlanta, January 21 & 22, 2018](#)

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