How To Join Audio

*You must enter your attendee ID # when you call into the teleconference to ‘raise your hand’, be unmuted, and participate in the discussion.

You will either see a small telephone icon or headset icon next to your name if you are connected to the audio. If not, then you cannot be unmuted.

Don’t know your attendee ID?
Click on the ‘EVENT INFO’ tab on your WebEx screen. If using the telephone, call in again and enter in this information.
Instructions

• All participants are muted.

• There will be time for questions and answers throughout the meeting. Only those connected online will be able to participate.
  – To ask a question or make a comment, please ‘raise your hand’ using the small button on the right hand panel
  – We may not get around to all comments/questions, BUT you may leave additional comments in the comment box to be compiled after the session

• This session will be recorded and notes will be shared via the listserv after the call.
Agenda

• Welcome!

• USDA GroupGAP Certification
  Donna Burke-Fonda, Assistant Branch Chief, Audit Services Branch, Specialty Crops Inspection Division

• Produce Safety Alliance Updates
  – General training updates
  – Regional initiatives
GroupGAP Certification Program
Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification

- Verifies an operation – e.g., farmers, packers, and distributors – follows industry-recognized food safety practices and Food and Drug Administration recommendations
- Required for any grower providing fruits and vegetables to the AMS Commodity Procurement program (USDA Foods)
- Required by more and more retail and institutional buyers

Obtaining GAP certification has presented a major obstacle for small farmers who want to access those larger markets

Until now...
GroupGAP Audit Program

Making food safety certification

- Accessible
- Affordable
- Possible

For growers of all sizes
GroupGAP Pilot Program

» **Goal:** Help smaller growers and cooperatives meet retailers’ on-farm food safety requirements

» **Pilot Duration:** 2013-2015

» **Partner:** Wallace Center at Winrock International

» **Model:** Growers, food hubs, and cooperatives work together to be certified as a group

» **Benefits:** Allows growers to save money and leverage economies of scale in the marketplace

» **Outcome:** Building on the pilot’s success, made the **GroupGAP audit program** a permanent service offering
GroupGAP Audit Program

» GroupGAP

> A robust certification program that addresses the unique challenges smaller producers and food hubs face in complying with food safety audits

> Meets the demands of the retail, food service, and institutional buying community

> Will be aligned with requirements of Food Safety Modernization Act
Growers, food hubs, and other marketing organizations can work collectively to undergo GAP certification as a group to:

- Share the cost of certification
- Operate under a single central quality management system
  - Share resources
  - Implement food safety training
  - Coordinate activities
- Undergo an audit jointly to obtain GroupGAP certification
- Internally oversee the food safety activities of members
GroupGAP Audit Program

» Benefits

> **Producers**: Makes food safety certification accessible and opens new doors to larger, more stable, and more profitable markets

> **Retailers and Larger Buyers**: Provides new sources of, and marketing opportunities for local specialty crop products

> **Consumers**: Expands access to a greater diversity and quantity of safe, fresh, local produce
GroupGAP Audit Program

USDA will begin accepting applications April 4, 2016
GroupGAP Program Requirements
Steps to GroupGAP Certification

» Define The Group
  > Define group members, crops, production systems, centralized facility
  > Identify management structure
  > Identify any outsourced processes

» Implement a Quality Management System (QMS)
  > Based on ISO 9001 or equivalent standard and GroupGAP requirements
  > Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the group and members
  > Determine records that will be used to document the adherence to the program
QMS Requirements

» Develop and implement a Quality Management System (QMS)
  > Create and implement a QMS that includes elements of ISO 9001
  > Include procedures like internal audits, document control, and control of non-conforming product

» Develop food safety system
  > Choose the Good Agricultural Practices audit that meets the needs of the group and its buyers
    • GAP&GHP, Harmonized Produce GAP, Mushroom GAP, and additional scopes such as food defense or the Global Markets Addendum
  > Help all group members implement a food safety plan that is tailored to the chosen food safety standard and QMS/group requirements
QMS Requirements

» Perform internal audits of the group and its QMS system
  > Carried out by the group’s internal auditor(s) who has been trained to USDA requirements
  > Internal audits include:
    • Producer (farm) audits of each member, including any applicable unannounced and/or follow-up audits
    • Internal QMS audits
Group Definition: Producers who come together to implement a shared food safety program

- Group members may have differing crops or production practices
- No minimum or maximum number of members
- No geographic limitations on the spread of a group
- For 2016, not accepting applications from international groups
GroupGAP Groups

» Group Roles
  > Producers/members
  > Central manager with overall responsibility for the group and QMS implementation
  > Internal auditor(s)
  > Point of contact for application process
Group Responsibilities

» Determine group’s management structure and members’ responsibilities

» Develop, operate under, and share accountability under a single QMS and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

» Hold all growers in the group accountable for meeting food safety requirements
Group Responsibilities

» Maintain documentation and records required by the group’s QMS
» Complete and document training
» Identify appropriately trained staff to conduct internal producer (farm) audits of all members
» Establish system for overseeing internal auditor(s)
» Work with all members to ensure readiness for third-party audits
» Document, remedy, and respond to auditor or GroupGAP coordinator about non-conformities
Internal Auditor

» Each group must have trained internal auditor(s)
» May be group member or contractor
» Meets USDA criteria for education, experience, and personal attributes
» Fulfills USDA training requirements, including:
  • Fundamentals of Auditing
  • Food safety (GAP) training
  • Food safety standard-specific training
> Education requirement can be met through USDA training or approved, external equivalent courses
QMS System Audit

- Evaluates implementation of and adherence to the group’s QMS
  - Review of group’s documents and records
  - Interviews with group management, QMS staff, and members (as applicable)
  - Review of completed internal audits
USDA (External) Audits

» USDA Producer (Farm) Audits
  > Number of audits = square root of the number of members, at a minimum
  > More audits if systemic problems are identified
  > Members to be audited randomly selected based on a USDA risk assessment of various factors

» USDA Auditors
  > Federal and/or Federal-State Partners
USDA GAP Certification

» Group Certification
  > Group certified as a whole
  > One certificate for the entire group

» Member Certification
  > Group members may chose to receive individual certificates that certify each member as part of the larger certified group

» USDA website lists both group and individual members as part of the larger group
# Fee Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Application Fee</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USDA External Producer Audits</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA System Audits</td>
<td>Actual audit time, including associated desk and on-site audit activity, and auditor travel time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA Follow-up Audits</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Continued Participation Fee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Member List Change Fee</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current USDA audit rate is $92 per hour
GroupGAP may be for you if you are part of a group that wants to create a strong food safety system that satisfies buyers, and creates success by opening doors to new, larger, and more stable markets.
Rolls for Extension
Front Line for Groups

» Answer questions about the program
  » All questions which can’t be answered should be directed to GroupGAP@ams.usda.gov

» Help growers determine if group certification is the right option for them

» Connect growers within your state who may be interested in forming groups
Rolls for Extension

Training

» Members of the groups will be required to attend food safety training

» Internal auditor candidates must take PSA course or other FDA-recognized course prior to auditor training
  > Can be Train-The-Trainer or Grower Course

» Training in agricultural QMS development
  > If you, or anyone you know, has knowledge in this area please let us know so that we can develop a list of resources
Other Roles

» As internal auditors
» As group managers/consultants
» Help navigate state funding resources

> If you have concerns about how GroupGAP fits into state cost sharing programs and other funding mechanisms, please contact us with program details
Resources

» USDA GroupGAP Webpage:
  www.ams.usda.gov/groupgap
  > GroupGAP Users Guide
  > Frequently Asked Questions
  > Internal Auditor Training Opportunities
  > Webinar Recordings
  > Informational Fact Sheets

» Wallace Center:
  www.wallacecenter.org/foodsafety

» GroupGAP Email:
  GroupGAP@ams.usda.gov
Thank You

» For more information:

Donna Burke-Fonda or Audrey Draper
202-720-5021
GroupGAP@ams.usda.gov

www.ams.usda.gov/groupgap
PSA Training Updates

- PSA will **not** be hosting any Train-the-Trainer or Grower Training Courses until September 2016
- Working with FDA Division of Produce Safety to align course materials with final regulations
- Train-the-Trainer and Grower Training Courses will be announced via the general listserv, once available
- For those who attended the 2014/2015 TTT Courses
  - Trainer interview process and update webinar will become available when curriculum materials are complete
PSA Team & Regional Extension Associates

Northwest: Reviewing applicants

Midwest:
- Don Stoeckel, Ph.D.

Northeast:
- Betsy Bihn, Ph.D.
- Gretchen Wall, M.S.
- Michele Humiston

Southeast:
- Kristin Woods, Ph.D.

Southwest:
- Donna Pahl, M.S.
PSA Regional Extension Associate
Initiatives & Projects

• Provide regional talks, updates, and work with state and regional collaborators to develop networks
• Develop fact sheets and continuing education materials
• Interface with FDA Division of Produce Safety in editing process and TAN submissions
• Develop presentations to share with collaborators
• Pursue cross-training in areas of expertise, as well as training for other aspects of FSMA (e.g., FSPCA)
• Conduct future PSA Grower and Train-the-Trainer Courses
• Update existing educational materials (e.g., Decision Trees)
Next Meeting

• Monday, April 25, 2016 at 2PM EST
• Send in agenda topics to glw53@cornell.edu
• An audio recording and notes will be available after this meeting.
Contact Us!

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