



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) partners with farmers to support conservation on their farms. Both conservation of natural resources and assuring a safe food supply are essential for produce farmers. NRCS Conservation Planners identify and address resource concerns related to soil, water, air, plants, animals, and energy, as well as social and economic factors.



Many NRCS conservation practices address pathogen movement in the environment. For example, by slowing and filtering runoff, filter strips and riparian vegetation protect surface water from pathogen contamination. Other conservation practices assist farmers in managing animal waste or wildlife movement patterns. NRCS Conservation Planners recognize that their central mission of supporting farmers' conservation stewardship may intersect with food safety management activities.

When a farmer expresses concerns about the design, installation or management of a conservation practice for any reason, NRCS staff strive to include farmers' considerations of complex production, market and regulatory factors in the planning process, and seek ways to best support conservation while allowing farmers to make other management decisions necessary in their farm and ranching operations.

Once a conservation plan is completed, NRCS Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) and other supporting documents are used to ensure that the best possible science and technology are used to guide site-specific implementation of a conservation plan. Typically, a conservation plan includes a suite of practices individually tailored to the unique needs of the setting, and the landowner's interest and ability to implement the plan.

NRCS Certified Conservation Planners provide producers with technical assistance for their farm and help to determine if they are eligible for NRCS financial assistance to address their conservation goals. A conservation plan, developed through the planning process may qualify the producer for various Farm Bill conservation financial assistance programs.



## Resources to co-manage conservation and food safety

Research scientists and extension specialists, working together with food safety and conservation professionals, have created a series of educational and training resources to support produce farmers as they make food safety sensitive conservation management decisions. These resources can be found here: [http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/Preharvest/Co-Management\\_of\\_Food\\_Safety\\_and\\_Sustainability/](http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/Preharvest/Co-Management_of_Food_Safety_and_Sustainability/)

These include:

- An on-line training course for food safety professionals with USDA-Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) auditor training CEUs offered;
- A series of resource sheets for food safety auditors that describe conservation practices commonly used in agriculture's production environment; and
- Educational materials for produce growers, buyers and food safety professionals.

## General information about pathogens available from NRCS

**Nutrient Management Technical Note No. 9** March 2012

*Introduction to Waterborne Pathogens in Agricultural Watersheds*

Introduction to Waterborne Pathogens in Agricultural Watersheds

Provides general information about pathogens. See here:

<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/OpenNonWebContent.aspx?content=32935.wba>



## Information from FDA about Produce Safety Rule

Information about the Produce Safety Rule can be found at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) website: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm334114.htm>

A Printer Friendly Fact Sheet on the main provisions of the rule is available here:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/UCM472887.pdf>

**For detailed information about NRCS services in your area,  
please contact your local Field Office.**

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/about/>



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