



## IS YOUR FARM COVERED BY THE PRODUCE SAFETY RULE?

You should have heard by now of the term FSMA. It actually stands for **Food Safety Modernization Act**. It was signed into law by President Obama on January 4, 2011. Its aim is to ensure the U.S. food supply is safe by shifting the focus from responding to contamination to **preventing** it. It is considered the first major piece of federal legislation addressing food safety since 1938. In November 2015, FDA finalized the Produce Safety Rule, which sets food safety standards for farms in an effort to minimize the risks of microbiological contamination that may occur during the growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of fresh produce. This rule is among seven major rules that were recently finalized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and span across the supply chain.

Forty-two states established cooperative agreements with the FDA to implement the Produce Safety rule. FDA funded those states at \$21.8M for the initial planning year. This year, FDA has increased the second year funding and added another state to the effort. The state agencies cooperating with FDA in thirty-nine of the states are the **departments of agriculture**.



In Massachusetts, our Produce Safety Team in the Agricultural Markets Division is working on a strategic plan for the coming few years to implement the Produce Safety Rule. Our team will support you growers through education, training, and technical assistance to make sure you are ready for compliance.

### **The following 3 things should be on your to-do list:**

- 1- **REGISTER:** Contact us to register your farm (for free) with MDAR. Following your registration, you would be eligible for a technical assistance visit on your farm to assist you with any issues and concerns you might have, and get you ready for compliance.
- 2- **KNOW if your farm is covered by the rule and get familiar with the records you need to have:** <https://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/UCM472499.pdf>
- 3- **ATTEND a Produce Safety Rule Grower Training course:** If you are covered, and/or qualified exempt, a responsible party at your farm should attend a Produce Safety Grower Training course (1day) which we will be offering during the fall and winter 2017/2018. Contact us to add your name to the list!

### **We want to hear from you!**

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