

FSMA Produce Safety Rule Requirements for Worker Training

According to FSMA's Produce Rule, §112.21-23:

Training programs must include:

1. Principles of food hygiene and food safety
2. Recognizing symptoms of foodborne illness and the importance of personal hygiene for all personnel and visitors
3. Other training relevant to the worker's job

and

Training programs must:

- Be appropriate for the job and conducted upon hiring
- Include refresher training throughout the season (at least annually) or when a problem arises
- Be easily understood
- Be supervised by a qualified person
- Include a process for documenting the training

Principles of food hygiene and food safety

Concepts for training workers

- Microorganisms (bacteria, viruses, parasites) can cause disease
- Pathogenic microorganisms are spread through feces – animal and human – and sick workers
- They are spread through direct fecal contamination, water, soil, hands and clothing, tools, equipment, surfaces
- Good hygiene helps reduce risk of spreading disease
- Standardized practices are designed to help reduce risks of contamination
- It is important to understand and follow standardized practices

Recognizing signs of illness and importance of personal hygiene

Train on:

- Handwashing techniques
- Recognizing foodborne illness symptoms: vomiting, fever, sore throat, common cold symptoms
- Not working (or at least handling produce) when sick – what is your reporting/sick time policy?

Training relevant to the worker's job

- Workers need to use food safety practices **every day** to reduce produce safety risks
- Food safety practices are learned so training is key to successful implementation
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** should be developed to provide clear, step-by-step instructions for how workers should complete specific tasks

Things to Consider

- **Workers should understand WHY food safety practices are important**
 - **Training should:**
 - Be relevant to their jobs and daily tasks
 - Outline clear expectations
 - Detail practices that reduce risks
 - Be presented through a variety of learning media and methods (through posters, verbal training, etc.)
 - Provide an opportunity for participants to practice skills they are expected to use
 - Include interactive and visual learning opportunities, such as walking through the steps of a specific task or showing a short video
 - **Your job after delivering training is to:**
 - Model good hygienic behavior
 - Be consistent about expectations
 - Provide the tools and resources for people to do their jobs safely as instructed
 - Handwashing stations
 - Clean and stocked toilet facilities
 - Break areas
 - First aid kits
 - Cleaning supplies
 - Specific tools for a given job
 - Set standards and, in cooperation with the people actually performing the tasks, create procedures for meeting those standards
 - Oversee to make sure that tools are consistently provided, standards are consistently being met
 - Be open to feedback or reports of systems not working properly
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- ❖ What are things I need to train at the start?
 - ❖ What are the things I need to reinforce routinely?
 - ❖ What do you want for your farm, your business?
 - ❖ What are you hoping trainees will take away?
 - ❖ How do you go from meeting a regulatory requirement to making sure that the ideas covered in the training are meaningful and effective?

→ Cannot just focus on getting their signature on a training log at the end of the session. Need to think about how to set your workers up, set your systems up, so that practices are ingrained and become part of the culture of the farm.