

## **DETERMINING CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE AND DEMAND FOR PRODUCE GROWN ON GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP) CERTIFIED FARMS FY 2008**

As reported in the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Rhode Island saw a sharp increase in the number of farms and total land in farms. Farms grossing less than \$50,000 in sales made up the majority of the increase and the number of farms grossing more than \$50,000 in sales also rose. Rhode Island farms are small in size compared to other regions of the country. Eighty-four percent are 1-99 acres and the rest are 100-499 acres. Many farmers focus on marketing to consumers through on-farm retail and/or pick-your-own operations and the 40 farmers markets held throughout the state in urban and rural areas. Twelve of these markets have at least 90 participating growers and include two in-door markets which are open during the winter months. While the majority of farmers engage in direct consumer sales, some of the larger farms sell wholesale to regional/local grocery stores, restaurants and school food service operations.

The Rhode Island Good Agricultural Practices (RI GAP) program, a partnership between the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture, was established in 2002. This project was undertaken to assist farms by providing training and consultations for growers in preparation for the on-farm audit required for RI GAP certification, and to promote the GAP program with consumers who visit the state's farmer's markets.

### **FINAL REPORT**

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## **Rhode Island DEM/Division of Agriculture Final Report: GAP FSMIP Grant 12-25-G-0678**

### **Description of the Issue**

The Rhode Island Good Agricultural Practices program, a partnership between the University of Rhode Island and RI Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agricultural, was established in 2002 with support of a CSREES/USDA grant. This program has been sustained in Rhode Island following the conclusion of the initial grant due to personnel and financial commitment of URI and RIDEM/Division Agriculture.

According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Rhode Island saw a sharp increase, the highest in New England and likely the US in the number of farms and total land in farms. Farms grossing less than \$50,000 in sales make up the majority of the increase; however, the number of farms grossing more than \$50,000 in sales also rose to from 168 in 2002 to 173 in 2007. (<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/index.htm>). Also, RI farms are small in size compared to other regions of the country: 84% only 1-99 acres and 16%, 100-499 acres (Peter Susi, RIDEM/Division Agriculture, 2011). Many farmers focus their marketing efforts to consumers through on-farm retail and/or pick-your-own operations and the 40 farmers markets held throughout the state in urban and rural areas. Twelve of these markets have at least 90 growers participating and include two in-door markets which are open during the winter months. (RIDEM, 2010) According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, their direct market sales totaled \$6,292 million with 249 farms reporting direct market sales. Thus, while the majority of farmers engage in both in direct sales to the consumers, some of the larger farms do wholesale to regional/local grocery stores, restaurants and school food service operations. Currently, there are 40 farms that are RIGAP certified and require yearly recertification.

The on-farm, RIGAP audit used to determine GAP certification and recertification was adapted from the USDA audit. The RI audit, which is reviewed and modified yearly, includes standards specific to small farms and on-farm retail operations. Comparison of the current USDA and the RIGAP audit forms suggest that the programs are comparable other than the area of the audit devoted to direct sales. The RIGAP audit includes a greater number of criteria than the USDA GAP audit form.

The outreach educational efforts resulting from this project extended the grower outreach activities developed and implemented under the previous grant which included sessions for growers and on farm consultations for growers to assist them in preparing for the audit which is conducted by RIDEM, Division of Agriculture personnel This project included an effort to reach consumers who patronize farmer's markets with information and resources concerning the RIGAP program and how to safely handle fresh fruits and vegetables at home.

A secondary goal of the RIGAP program is to sustain and support RI agriculture. The RIGAP program assists in this effort by providing RIGAP certified growers with RIGAP-related marketing resources that could be used to inform RI consumers about the goals of the RIGAP program. These resources inform consumers about the benefits of RIGAP including the fact certified growers are taking steps to bring food safety principles onto the farm in an effort to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

.The operators recognize and accept RIGAP certification as a condition of sale. Second, the RI GAP program provides the opportunity necessary to be proactive in addressing food safety concerns for small growers and, thereby, preparing them for implementation of the federal food safety regulations. Due to the developing safety standards for fresh produce and other aspects of the current food safety legislation that could impact the food agricultural industry in RI, it is imperative that the growers are kept informed and updated from the beginning – long before FDA rules are in place. The RI GAP program has prepared our growers to “take the next step” in produce safety due to the long standing proactive approach of this program. Now, more then ever, this program needs support in an effort to keep RI agriculture viable and allow for its potential expansion as the desire for locally grown produce continues to grow. Therefore, the propose of this project is not only to continue to provide GAP training, with consultation to growers and

program promotion to consumers, but to expand the overall goal and provide growers with the information and resources they need to address the new federal food safety act and FDA's new authority.

## **Project Approach to the Issue**

The outreach education and training activities addressed during this project included:

- 1. To provide training and consultations for growers in preparation for the on-farm audit required for RI GAP certification.**

Two, 5 hour training sessions were held during the period of this project. Fifty-six (56) growers participated in the training sessions. Attendees at the 2011 session included four students from Johnson and Wales University and a representative from USDA/FSA. Topics covered in during the training included: Introduction to RI GAP Program, RI GAP Program Guidelines and RI Farm Audit, Foodborne Illness- the Facts, Water Sources for Irrigation and Drinkable Water, Manure/Biosolids Practices Sanitation Traceback, Worker Health and Hygiene, Temperature Control and Food Defense. The March 2011 training introduced information on the 2010 Food Safety Modernization Act and its implications for fruit and vegetable growers. Also included in the 2011 training were revised/updated presentations on Foodborne Illness: the Facts and Traceback and information on developing a food safety plan. Also, at the 2011 training, the consumer exhibit both in Spanish and English and the consumer resource materials were available for viewing by attendees. Presenters for the topics were: Lori F Pivarnik, Martha Patnoad and Nicole Richard, Karne Menezes from the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program and Pete Susi from RI Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture. Each participant was given a notebook of RIGAP topical fact sheets and other current food safety research based information pertaining to the topics addressed in the training. Karen Menezes the farm visit co-coordinator made appointments with growers in attendance to visit their farm to begin the certification process. The those participants in the March 2011 training who evaluated the training session indicated that they had significantly increased their understanding of the training session topics ( See Table 1 for complete evaluation results).

The RIGAP grower training resources were submitted to the Produce Safety Alliance. They were "showcased" at their June 29 and 30, 2011 meeting in Orlando, Florida during the session on education and training materials.

Growers that were being recertified were visited once during the 2010 and 2011 growing seasons. Growers who were new to the program were visited 1-3 times depending on the issues that needed to be addressed. The first visit to a grower included a review of the audit requirements and "walking the farm" to determine what farm/food safety practices need to be modified/changed to achieve a positive audit. Ms Menezes also reviewed and discussed GAP information that was presented during the training session. These on-farm consultations allow the grower to think through and discuss possible solutions to the issues of concern. In many instances, the changes required were simple and easily accomplished at little or no cost. Follow-up visits to new growers reviewed their progress towards meeting the goals established during the first visit. Ms Menezes, and the grower, in consultation with, a RIDEM/Div of Ag staff member, determine when the grower is ready for the audit. A RIDEM/ Div of Ag staff member conducted the audit and the RIDEM/Div of Agriculture issues the certification. A similar process is followed for those growers who need to be recertified. In 2009, Ms Menezes, made 50 farm visits to both growers new to the program and those being recertified. In 2010, she made 58 farm visits.

As of May 31, 2011 at the conclusion of this project 40 RI farms are now RIGAP certified..

- 2. To promote the GAP program with consumers who visit the state's farmer's markets in an effort to increase the visibility of the program with consumers and growers.**

During the summer/fall of 2010, a table-top exhibit completed under the previous project and RIGAP promotional materials were displayed at farmer's markets throughout the state. A URI student intern manned the exhibit. During the summer/fall of 2010, a URI student intern visited 13

farmers markets in both urban and rural areas of the state, including two indoor markets. The markets were selected based on the number of consumers who visit the market, location and number of RIGAP farmers participating in the market. During her visits, she interacted with over 150 consumers discussing with them the particulars of the RIGAP program and distributing RIGAP promotional material on the aspects of the program and information on caring for fresh fruits and vegetables at home in the form of a refrigerator magnet. She also interacted with RIGAP certified growers who were present at the various markets. The exhibit and the food safety/RIGAP information was well-received by both consumers and growers.

The consumer exhibit, magnet and RIGAP program brochure were translated into Spanish and printed and will be utilized at farmer's markets in the summer of 2011 with a high Spanish population attendance (copies are attached). Other promotional material in the form of hats for growers were purchased and distributed to RIGAP certified growers.

### **Contributions of the Public/Private Agency Cooperators and Partners**

This project is a true partnership between the Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program of the College and Life Sciences at the University of Rhode Island (URI) and the RI Department of Environmental Management, Division of Agriculture (RIDEM/Div of Ag) URI is responsible for all educational activities including grower training and on farm consultations and RIDEM/Div of Ag conducts the final farm audit and RIGAP certifies/ recertifies the grower. All the educational resources, including those developed for consumers are developed by URI in consultation with RIDEM/Div of Ag. The partners meet on a regular basis to review the status of the program, its outreach materials and make any adjustments needed to the RIGAP audit form.

There is also a link with the Farm to School Program as they encourage growers to become RIGAP certified. The state's school foodservice providers (Chartwells, Aramark and Sodexo) are strong supporters of the RIGAP program and require this certification of the growers who sell their produce to them.

Also, Farm Fresh, RI a local food system that values the environment, health and quality of life of RI farmers and consumers and work to preserve Rhode Island farmland have supported the project by encouraging RIGAP exhibit participation in the farmers markets they manage in the urban areas of the state.

### **Current and Future Benefits of the Project**

The program benefits both the grower and consumer. The grower benefits by developing and implementing on-farm food safety practices that will reduce the risk of produce grown on their farms being the cause of a foodborne illness outbreak. Also, the RIGAP certification has opened new markets to them including selling to school foodservice operations. Many growers are now working with school food service providers in an effort to select crops and varieties of fruits and vegetables to grow that meet the specific needs of school lunch programs.

Consumers benefit as the RIGAP certification of a grower lets them know that a grower has maintained a specific set of food safety standards when planting, growing, harvesting and selling their produce. Also, viewing the self-standing exhibit and reading the resource materials on the RIGAP project and how to safely care for fresh produce at home provides them with opportunities to learn methods that will help to reduce the risk of foodborne illness in the home related to fresh produce.

**In conclusion**, the direct result of the educational outreach directed at RI growers, there are currently 40 RI GAP certified farms. This number represents 25% of the farms in RI who grow and market fruits and vegetables. For the duration of the project, 56 farmers and others participated in two, 5 hour training sessions. In 2009, Ms Menezes, made 50 farm visits to both growers new to the program and those being recertified and in 2010, she made 58 farm visits. The consumer exhibit has been viewed by several hundred individuals at 13 farmers markets during the summer and fall 2010.

## Rhode Island GAP Grower Certification Program

### What does GAP mean?

GAP means **Good Agricultural Practices**. These practices are part of a *voluntary* food safety program developed by FDA and USDA for fruit and vegetable growers. The goal is to help reduce foodborne illness. The GAP program includes key steps that growers can use to reduce or minimize contamination of produce by disease-causing microorganisms. Food safety is everyone's responsibility from the grower to consumers.

### What is the RI GAP program?

The voluntary Rhode Island GAP Grower Certification Program is a joint effort of the Division of Agriculture, RI Department of Environmental Management, the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program, and RI growers.

The program begins with training for growers and their workers on the application of GAP food safety principles to the growing, harvesting, processing and transporting of fresh fruits and vegetables. Once a grower feels they have met the RI GAP guidelines, a staff person from the RI Division of Agriculture visits the farm. This visit, which includes an audit, confirms that the grower has successfully applied the required GAP practices during growing, harvesting, processing and transporting of fresh fruits and vegetables.

After a successful audit, the grower will be certified as a RI GAP grower. The farm must be audited every year to maintain their GAP Certification.

### What does this mean to a consumer?

The GAP certified grower has reviewed their on-farm food safety practices during growing, harvesting, processing and transporting of fresh produce in relation to:

- Application of manure
- Irrigation water
- Worker hygiene practices
- Sanitation practices

The GAP certified grower has taken the key steps necessary to help control contamination of produce by harmful microorganisms.

These growers are doing the best job they can to include preventive steps that help produce safe fruits and vegetables. However, food safety is still everyone's responsibility. There is no way to guarantee that produce is always free from contamination.

### What can I do at home to reduce the risk of harmful microbial contamination of fresh produce?

- ✓ Choose produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- ✓ Refrigerate or chill produce immediately after harvest or purchase.
- ✓ Wash hands with warm water and soap before and after handling fresh produce – at home or at pick your own operations.
- ✓ Wash fresh fruits and vegetables under cool running tap water. NEVER use soap or detergents. Air dry or dry with a clean paper towel.
- ✓ Scrub firm produce such as melons and cucumbers with a clean hard bristle brush under cool running tap water.
- ✓ Cut away any bruised or damaged areas with a clean knife.
- ✓ Don't cross contaminate. Always wash and sanitize cutting boards, counters, utensils and dishes that come in contact with raw meat, fish or poultry before using to prepare fresh produce.

Source: FDA5/08

**How can I get more information about the RI GAP Grower Certification Program?**

Division of Agriculture  
RI Department of Environmental Management  
401-222-2782  
email- psusi@dem.state.ri.us

URI Cooperative Extension  
Food Safety Education Program  
401-874-2972/2960  
email-pivarnik@uri.edu,  
mpatnoad@uri.edu

For more information on GAP visit:  
<http://cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodguid.html>

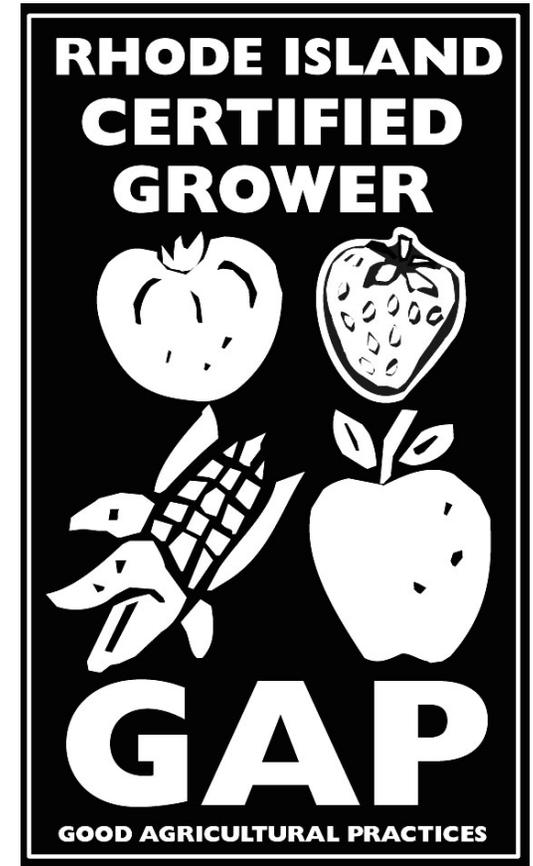
For general food safety information visit:  
[www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.html](http://www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.html)

[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

5/08

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*University of Rhode Island, US Department of Agriculture and local governments cooperating, provides equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or preference, creed and disability.*



**A GROWER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

**RI DEPT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT  
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
AND  
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION FOOD  
SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM**

# What can I do to keep produce safe at home?

- Choose produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- Refrigerate or chill produce immediately after harvest or purchase.
- Wash hands with warm water and soap, rinse with warm water and dry with a clean towel.
- Wash fresh fruit and vegetables under cool running tap water. NEVER use detergent or soap. Air dry or dry with a clean paper towel.
- Scrub firm produce such as melons and cucumbers with a clean, hard bristle brush under cool running water.
- Cut away any bruised or damaged areas with a clean knife.
- Don't cross contaminate. Always wash cutting boards, counters, utensils, and dishes that come in contact with raw meat, seafood, or poultry with warm water and soap and rinse with hot water before using to prepare produce.
- Store produce above meat, seafood, or poultry in the refrigerator.

For more information:

Call URI Gardening/Food Safety Hotline 1-800-448-1011

(Mon.–Thurs. 9 a.m.–2 p.m.) or visit [www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.shtml](http://www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.shtml)

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Rhode Island Department  
of Environmental Management  
Division of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
FOOD SAFETY  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

# Attachment #1 RIGAP Consumer Exhibit in Spanish

### ¿Qué es el programa RI GAP?

Este es un programa de certificación voluntaria para agricultores.

En un esfuerzo conjunto con:

- el Programa de Seguridad en los Alimentos, Extensión Cooperativa de la Universidad de Rhode Island;
- El Departamento de Control del Medioambiente de Rhode Island/División Agrícola;
- Los agricultores en Rhode Island.



### ¿Cómo un agricultor se certifica por medio de RI GAP?

- Participa en capacitaciones que incluyen los conceptos de la agricultura, cosecha, procesamiento y transporte de frutas y verduras frescas.
- Toma parte en la consultoría que el personal de UPEI provee en las granjas mismas.
- Participa en las auditorías que lleva a cabo el personal del Departamento de Manejo Ambiental de Rhode Island/División Agrícola.
- Les hacen una auditoría anual para mantener su certificación.

### Inquietudes con respecto a la seguridad de los productos agrícolas

Existen microorganismos dañinos (patógenos) que forman parte del medioambiente agrícola o del medioambiente de los cultivos. Los productos agrícolas pueden llegar a contaminarse en cualquier momento, desde el momento en que están en la granja hasta que llegan a la mesa, a causa de:

- la tierra,
- el agua,
- la falta de higiene de los trabajadores,
- la falta de buenas prácticas sanitarias,
- los animales salvajes o domésticos,
- la manera inapropiada de tocar los productos después de la cosecha,
- la suciedad de los recipientes en que se almacenan o venden.



### ¿De qué manera los agricultores en Rhode Island está resolviendo estas inquietudes?

Lo hacen cuando participan voluntariamente en el Programa de Buenas Prácticas Agrícolas.

## RIGAP-

### Cómo aplicar los principios de seguridad en los productos agrícolas que van de la granja a la mesa.



### En el hogar, ¿qué puedo hacer para mantener seguros los productos agrícolas?

- Elija productos que no estén maltratados o dañados.
- Refrigerare o enfrie inmediatamente los productos después de la cosecha o después de comprarlos.
- Lávese las manos con agua tibia y jabón y séquese las con una toalla limpia.
- Lave la fruta y vegetales frescos bajo un chorro de agua fría. NUNCA los lave con jabón o detergente. Séquelos al aire o con una toalla de papel limpia.



- Con un cepillo de cerdas duras, restriegue bajo un chorro de agua fría todos los productos que son duros, como los melones y pepinos.
- Con un cuchillo limpio, corte y deseche toda área que esté maltratada o dañada.
- No extienda la contaminación. Siempre lave las tablas de cortar, los utensilios y platos que estén en contacto con carnes o aves crudas o con mariscos crudos. Lávelos en agua tibia con jabón y enjuague con agua caliente antes de usarlos para cortar otros productos.
- En el refrigerador, guarde los productos agrícolas arriba encima de las carnes, los mariscos y las aves.

Para más información:  
 CONTACTO: RIGAP/RI GAP INC. 300-440-4000 O EN LINEA: [www.ri-gap.com](http://www.ri-gap.com)  
 O EN EL SITIO: [www.ri-gap.com](http://www.ri-gap.com)

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND  
 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
 00881-0299

Para más información:  
 CONTACTO: RIGAP/RI GAP INC. 300-440-4000 O EN LINEA: [www.ri-gap.com](http://www.ri-gap.com)  
 O EN EL SITIO: [www.ri-gap.com](http://www.ri-gap.com)

## Attachment #2: RIGAP Project Magnet: “Caring for Fresh Produce at Home” in Spanish

**En el hogar ¿qué puedo hacer para mantener seguros los productos agrícolas?**

- Elija productos que no están maltratados o dañados.
- Refrigera o enfría inmediatamente los productos después de la cosecha o después de comprarlos.
- Lávese las manos con agua tibia y jabón y séquese las con una toalla limpia.
- Lave la fruta y vegetales frescos bajo un chorro de agua fría. NUNCA los lave con jabón o detergente. Séquelos al aire o con una toalla de papel limpia.
- Con un cepillo de cerdas duras, restriegue bajo un chorro de agua fría todos los productos que son duros, como los melones y pepinos.
- Con un cuchillo limpio, corte y deseche toda área que esté maltratada o dañada.
- No extienda la contaminación. Siempre lave las tablas de cortar, los utensilios y platos que estén en contacto con carnes o aves crudas o con mariscos crudos. Lávelos en agua tibia con jabón y enjuague con agua caliente antes de usarlos para cortar otros productos.
- En el refrigerador, guarde los productos agrícolas arriba de las carnes, los mariscos y las aves.

Para obtener más información, llame a la línea gratuita de LPI:  
Responde en el idioma que prefiera 1-800-452-6911 (de lunes a jueves de 9 a.m. a 6 p.m.)  
o visite [www.usda.gov/foodsafety/ask/](http://www.usda.gov/foodsafety/ask/)

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Departamento de Control del  
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Departamento de Agricultura  
de los Estados Unidos



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UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO  
INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO DE  
AGRICULTURA

## Attachment #3 RIGAP Program 3- Fold Consumer Brochure in Spanish

### ¿Cómo puedo obtener más información sobre el Programa de Certificación para Agricultores RI GAP?

División Agrícola  
Departamento de Control del Medioambiente  
de Rhode Island  
401-222-2782  
peter.susi@dem.ri.gov

Extensión Cooperativa de URI  
Programa de educación sobre la seguridad  
de los alimentos  
401-874-2972/2960  
pivamik@uri.edu  
mpatnoad@uri.edu

Para obtener más información sobre GAP, visite:  
[www.ctsan.fda.gov/guidance.html](http://www.ctsan.fda.gov/guidance.html)

Para obtener información general  
sobre la seguridad de los alimentos, visite:  
[www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.html](http://www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.html)

[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

Este proyecto fue patrocinado en parte por el USDA CSREES  
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La Universidad de Rhode Island, el Departamento de Agricultura de los EE. UU. y los gobiernos locales que cooperaron proveen oportunidades igualitarias sin importar la raza, color, nacionalidad, sexo o preferencia sexual, credo o incapacidad.

5/08



**UN PROGRAMA DE  
CERTIFICACIÓN PARA  
AGRICULTORES**

Departamento de Control  
del Medioambiente  
División Agrícola  
y la  
Universidad de Rhode Island  
Extensión Cooperativa  
Programa de educación sobre  
la seguridad en los alimentos

## PROGRAMA GAP DE RHODE ISLAND PARA LA CERTIFICACIÓN DE AGRICULTORES

### ¿Qué significa GAP?

GAP (por sus siglas en inglés) significa Good Agricultural Practices [Buenas Prácticas Agrícolas]. Estas prácticas son parte de un programa voluntario de seguridad en los alimentos, el cual es un programa instituido por la FDA y el USDA para agricultores que cultivan frutas y vegetales. La meta del programa es reducir las enfermedades causadas por los alimentos. El programa GAP incluye etapas claves que los agricultores pueden utilizar para reducir o disminuir la contaminación de los productos agrícolas por microorganismos que causan enfermedades. La seguridad de los alimentos es la responsabilidad de todos, desde agricultores hasta consumidores.

### ¿Qué es el programa GAP?

Es un programa voluntario de certificación para agricultores en un esfuerzo conjunto de la División Agrícola, Departamento de Control del Medioambiente de Rhode Island, Extensión Cooperativa, Programa de educación sobre la seguridad en los alimentos y los agricultores de Rhode Island.

El programa comienza con unas capacitaciones para los agricultores y sus trabajadores sobre el aplico de las pautas de GAP, no sólo a lo relacionado a la seguridad de los alimentos sino también al cultivo, la cosecha, el procesamiento y el transporte de frutas y vegetales frescos. Cuando ya un agricultor ha cumplido en su opinión con las pautas de GAP, un trabajador del personal de la División Agrícola visita la granja. Esta visita, que incluye una auditoría, confirma que el agricultor ha aplicado de manera exitosa las pautas indicadas por GAP durante el cultivo, la cosecha, el procesamiento y el transporte de frutas y vegetales frescos.

Después de haber sido aprobado en la auditoría, al agricultor se le certificará en calidad de agricultor del programa GAP de RI. A la granja se le deberá hacer una auditoría cada año para conservar su certificación de GAP.

### ¿Qué significa esto para el consumidor?

El agricultor certificado por GAP ha implementado las prácticas de seguridad en los alimentos en su propia granja durante el cultivo, la cosecha, el procesamiento y el transporte de productos agrícolas frescos en lo referente a:

- La aplicación del estiércol.
- Agua para irrigación.
- Prácticas de higiene de los empleados.
- Prácticas de sanidad.

El agricultor certificado ha tomado los pasos claves necesarios para ayudar en el control de la contaminación de productos agrícolas por los microorganismos dañinos.

Estos agricultores están haciendo lo mejor que pueden al incluir prácticas de prevención que ayudan a producir frutas y vegetales seguros. Sin embargo, la seguridad de los alimentos sigue como la responsabilidad de todos. No hay manera de garantizar que los productos agrícolas estén siempre libres de contaminación.

### ¿Qué puedo hacer en casa para reducir el riesgo de contaminación de microbios en los productos frescos?

- ✓ Elija productos que no están maltratados o dañados.
- ✓ Refrigere o enfrie inmediatamente los productos después de la cosecha o después de comprarlos.
- ✓ Lávese las manos con agua tibia y jabón antes y después de tocar productos agrícolas frescos – ya sea en casa o en los lugares en donde usted mismo los recoge.
- ✓ Lave la fruta y los vegetales frescos bajo un chorro de agua fría. NUNCA los lave con jabón o detergente. Séquelos al aire o con una toalla de papel limpia.
- ✓ Con un cepillo duro, restriegue bajo un chorro de agua fría todos los productos que son duros, como los melones y pepinos.
- ✓ Con un cuchillo limpio, corte y deseche toda área que esté maltratada o dañada.
- ✓ No extienda la contaminación. Siempre lave y limpie las tablas de cortar, los estantes, los utensilios y los platos antes de usarlos para preparar productos frescos, especialmente si han estado en contacto con carnes, aves o mariscos crudos.

Fuente: FDA5/08

<b>Table 1:</b> <b>As a result of this training,</b> <b>RI GAP Training Session Evaluations, March 2011</b> <b>I... (N=26 Responses)</b>	<b>SCORE<sup>a</sup></b> <b>(Ave. ± Std.</b> <b>Dev.)</b>
understand the importance of the RI GAP program guidelines	4.3 ± 0.6
understand about sources of food safety hazards for produce	4.5 ± 0.5
understand the guidelines for safe water sources for use in the field, on the farm, and in the barn and/or packing house	4.5 ± 0.5
understand the guidelines for good manure/biosolids management in fields	4.4 ± 0.6
understand the guidelines for sanitation practices during harvest, post-harvest handling and storage	4.5 ± 0.6
understand the guidelines for sanitation and customer health and hygiene (e.g. "Pick Your Own" operations)	4.3 ± 0.8
understand the guidelines for worker health and hygiene	4.5 ± 0.6
understand the guidelines for temperature control during post-harvest handling	4.2 ± 0.8
understand the importance for record keeping	4.5 ± 0.5
understand the importance of traceback	4.4 ± 0.6
am familiar with the new Food Safety Modernization Act	3.7 ± 0.8
understand the importance of a written food safety plan for GAP	4.1 ± 0.8
<b>TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE</b>	<b>4.3 ± 0.6</b>
<sup>a</sup> Score based on 5 point scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree)	

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