

## **Quality Assurance and Food Safety Checklist for Restaurant, Grocery, Wholesale and Institution Sales Business Practice Summary**

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This list is the best practices for quality assurance and food safety summarizes interviews with chiefs, food service directors, retailers, experienced growers, and industry professionals. It examines the basic business-to-business functions Specifics will vary across firms. Some will have well-developed standards and protocol for their suppliers; others will be less formal. At the very least, these practices will help the grower/supplier communicate with potential buyers regarding their expectations for each business function. These practices are offered as guidelines on expectations summarized over many firms. They are intended as reference points for self-examination of the farmer's business practices to evaluate readiness for commercial markets and as a checklist for communicating on expectations held by specific buyers.

### **General**

- ✓ I understand that quality assurance from a wholesale buyer's perspective means the vendor guarantees 100% of the product meets their specifications.
- ✓ I understand the temperature requirements and safe handling practices for the products I deliver.
- ✓ I understand and will agree to buyer temperature protocols, and will meet those guidelines.
- ✓ I am willing to receive GAP training and certification if necessary.
- ✓ I am willing to have a farm inspection by the buying organization or a specified third party.

### **Cold Chain Requirements**

- ✓ I have discussed cold chain requirements for my product with the buyer and other handlers.
- ✓ I have procedures in place to maintain cold chain accuracy.
- ✓ My products packaging or labeling has cold chain information displayed on it clearly.
- ✓ I have tested my product to insure it maintain its quality throughout the cold chain.
- ✓ I understand how breaks in the cold chain affect my product.
- ✓ I know the optimal time for which my product needs to complete the cold chain.

## Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)

- ✓ I understand how my farm or agribusiness will be affected by FSMA.
- ✓ I understand when I am fully compliant and not compliant with FSMA.
- ✓ I am able to prove I have received my GAP training or certification.
- ✓ I have researched the tools and resources available to help me navigate FSMA.

## Quality Assurance

- ✓ I am able to explain to my customers how my handling practices maximize the life and the quality of the products they will receive from my farm.
- ✓ I have educated myself about safe food handling, proper temperatures and storage of the products I will be marketing from my farm.
- ✓ I understand the capabilities of traceability and its benefit to quality assurance.
- ✓ I know who is receiving my product when ownership changes.
- ✓ I know where quality control responsibilities for my product changes throughout the supply chain.

Contact us directly with comments, questions, or suggestions:

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