



Preparing for an On-Farm Readiness Review

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If you are looking for guidance on how to best prepare your farm for a Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule (21 CFR § 112) inspection or are interested in enhancing produce safety on your farm, an On-Farm Readiness Review (OFRR) is right for you!

Note: If you are just beginning to grow produce or would like a refresher regarding food safety, consider starting with the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training. Contact your county extension agent for more information.

For more information, visit www.uaex.edu/producesafety.

What is an On-Farm Readiness Review?

An OFRR is a non-regulatory, free assessment of a farm's readiness for inspection under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule. This is a chance for you to have a one-on-one conversation and farm walk-around with Produce Safety Rule experts to evaluate pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest conditions and practices; assess what you are doing well; and identify areas for improvement in food safety practices on your farm. It is very important that routine farm processes and operations (such as washing, packing, and harvesting activities) are happening during the OFRR so reviewers can make accurate recommendations for produce safety improvements specific to your farm.

Who conducts On-Farm Readiness Reviews?

OFRR's are conducted by the Local, Regional & Safe Foods team at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.

How is an On-Farm Readiness Review different from an audit or inspection?

An OFRR is not a regulatory visit. The OFRR is a voluntary and confidential on-site visit and was developed to increase education of food safety on your farm, identify opportunities for improvement, and prepare you for a FSMA Produce Safety Rule inspection (if applicable). All notes taken by the reviewers will be left with the farm at the end of the visit to prevent potential issues with the Freedom of Information Act.

What should I do to prepare for an On-Farm Readiness Review?

We strongly recommend that at least one person from your farm complete the Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training Course before scheduling an OFRR. The PSA Grower



Training will provide you with essential background knowledge about the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and recommended produce safety practices that will help you to get the most out of the OFRR. In addition, this training satisfies the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement for covered farms that “at least one supervisor or responsible party” completes “food safety training... recognized as adequate by FDA” (21 C.F.R. §112.22(c)).

Learn more at: <https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/training/grower-training-courses>.

If my farm is not covered under the FSMA Produce Safety Rule, can I still request an On-Farm Readiness Review?

Yes. Any farm that grows and/or sells produce is eligible to request an OFRR. However, farms that must currently comply with the Produce Safety Rule will be given first availability. In addition, farms that are small or just beginning production should start with the PSA Grower Training. Please visit www.uaex.edu/producesafety for more information.

What happens during an On-Farm Readiness Review?

- Reviewers will first ask a series of questions to better understand your farm’s produce safety practices and farm procedures.
- Reviewers will ask to observe different areas of the farm to view harvesting, washing, and packing processes as well as storage or holding areas.
- At the end of the visit, reviewers will provide feedback on observations and identify priority areas for improvement in produce safety practices on your farm.
- Cooperative Extension staff can provide additional technical assistance based on the feedback from your OFRR, which may involve follow-up information sharing or additional farm visits.

What if a public health hazard is found during my On-Farm Readiness Review?

In the rare instance that a serious condition that could be considered “egregious” is observed, reviewers will not notify FDA or any other state or federal agency if the product has not entered commerce and the issue can be immediately addressed. It is our intention to immediately address any serious concerns on-site.

How do I sign-up for an On-Farm Readiness Review?

To request an OFRR, please visit www.uaex.edu/producesafety to contact the Produce Safety Team.

Where should I go for more information?

Contact the Arkansas Department of Agriculture at: <https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/plant-industries/regulatory-section/produce-safety-program/>.

The Produce Safety Alliance resources at <https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/> are a great starting point for learning more about produce safety.

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