

# Developing Food Safety Plans and Standard Operating Procedures

Mariel Borgman, Extension Educator  
Community Food and Environment Institute  
Michigan State University

Vivien McCurdy  
McCurdy Consulting



MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

**“AND  
JUSTICE  
FOR ALL”**

\*\*\*\*\*

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (in education and training programs and activities), age, disability, or retaliation. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) If you require the information on this poster in alternative format (braille, large print, audiocassette, etc.), contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice or TDD).

If you require information about this program, activity, or facility in a language other than English, contact the USDA agency responsible for the program or activity, or any USDA office.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call toll free, (866) 632-9992 (voice). TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal relay at (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 577-8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

De acuerdo con la ley Federal y con la política del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA por sus siglas en inglés), esta institución prohíbe la discriminación ya sea por la raza, color, nacionalidad, sexo (en programas y actividades de educación y adiestramiento), edad, incapacidad de las personas, o por represalias. (No todas las prohibiciones se aplican a todos los programas).

Si usted necesita la información de este anuncio en un formato diferente (braille, letras grandes, o por medio de sonido, etc.), llame al Centro TARGET del Departamento de Agricultura al teléfono 202-720-2600 (voz o TDD).

Si usted necesita información sobre este programa, actividad o instalaciones en un idioma diferente del inglés, llame a la agencia del Departamento que maneja este programa o actividad, o a cualquier oficina del Departamento de Agricultura.

Para someter una queja de discriminación, escriba al USDA, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, o llame gratis al 1-866-632-9992 (voz). Para llamadas TDD, llame al USDA al número 1-800-877-8339 o al número 1-866-577-8642. El Departamento de Agricultura ofrece oportunidades de programas y de empleo libres de discriminación.

**USDA** UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Form AD-475-C (Revised 9/2006)

# Question #1

Everyone is talking about produce safety on the farm, but what does that involve?



# Produce Farm Food Safety Means

- Protecting water and soil
- Separating animals from crops
- Maintaining clean equipment
- Having a plan to address potential contamination situations
- Keeping a healthy workforce
- Following recommended handling practices
- Being able to prove compliance with food safety practices



## Question #2

What is a farm food safety plan?



# What is a Farm Food Safety Plan?

A dynamic guide that accurately tells your food safety story:

- Describes identified risks and actions to address those risks
- Defines your practices, policies, and SOPs
- Be prepared for buyer questions and third party audits



# Question #3

What is an SOP?



# What is an SOP?

An SOP is a **S**tandard **O**perating **P**rocedure.

SOPs outline step-by-step instructions to be followed in order to achieve a predictable, standardized, and desired result.



# Question #4

How do I create an SOP?



# How Do I Create an SOP?

Write down what you do and how you do it – EXACTLY!

- Do the task and write down every step
- Helpful to have another person observe and make sure you really capture each step and the details
- Review SOPs periodically for accuracy:
  - If you find the actual procedure is different than what is written down, determine if you need to change the SOP or retrain



# Components of an SOP

- Purpose
- Process
- Corrective Action
- Documentation and Records



## Question #5

Let's say that my food safety plan says that I will clean the bathroom every three days, but sometimes I forget and clean it every four days. As long as I write it down, am I ok?



## Question #5

- There are many policies and procedures that are correct and effective depending on the situation.
- Auditors and inspectors looking to see if your procedure is acceptable **AND** whether your written procedure is followed.
- Even if what you are doing is acceptable based on the situation, it may still be an issue if it doesn't match up with your written food safety plan and SOPs.



## Question #6

I am not a technology person.

Do I have to have a typed food safety plan?



# Do I Have to Have a Typed Food Safety Plan?

Food safety plans do not have to be typed, they just have to be legible.



## Question #7

There has to be an app for that.

Can I use my smartphone to help me with record keeping?



# Digital Record Keeping

- Digital records are acceptable as long as they can be made available to the auditor or inspector
- Are there programs/apps you have used?



## Question #8

How often do I have to update my farm's food safety plan?



# How Often Do I Have to Update My Farm's Food Safety Plan?

- Whenever you have changes to the farm (ex. new equipment, new processes)
- Whenever you revise a policy or procedure
- Consider reviewing at the beginning and end of each season



## Question #9

Where do I keep my farm food safety plan and SOPs?



# Where Do I Keep My Food Safety Plan?

- Where it is accessible to anyone who might need to see it
- May want to keep copies of portions of it (SOPs, records, or log sheets) in areas where those activities happen



# Food Safety Plan Template

Edit or adjust the template to fit your farm and procedures.  
Don't adjust your procedures to fit the template.



# Assistance

- Produce Safety Risk Assessment
- On Farm Readiness Review

