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GAP FAQ

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If I have a portable toilet for the field with no potable water, may I substitute hand cleanser/sanitizer and have that acceptable?

No. Potable water is required for hand washing at the toilet to get credit for the appropriate question. Hand cleanser/sanitizer may be used in addition to potable water. Mounting a water carboy filled with potable water outside the portable toilet for hand washing is acceptable. Of course, soap and single use towels are also required.

Recent Questions

If I am GAP certified, can an inspector visit me later and remove the certification if that inspector feels I am in violation?

Yes. To participate into the voluntary GAP program, you signed an agreement permitting unannounced audits. Additionally, when portions of the audit are performed later in the season, previously audited portions of your operation can reaudited.

What if I don't sign the agreement?

You will not be in GAP program, you will not be audited, and you will not be GAP certified.

Do I need to retrain the same employees every year?

Yes. The previous training you did was valid for only one year.

Do I need new field maps every year?

Yes. In many cases, you can use the maps from the previous year but the current crop locations have to be identified.

How much notice do I need to give to schedule a GAP audit?

Two weeks.

If I pass just one of the categories, am I GAP certified?

No. At the time of scheduling, you must state the sections you intend to be audited under. In most cases, it will be General, Farm Review (Part 1), Field Harvest and Field Packing (Part 2), Storage and Transportation (Part 4). If you Pack, Part 3 (Packing House Facility) will be required. You will not be GAP certified until all the sections you identified to be audited under are have been successfully passed.

Other Questions

If manure is spread on oat fields (not in potato production), can the potato land be answered "no manure is used?"

Yes.

Is "post-consumer waste compost" considered biosolids?

No. Biosolids are sludge from human waste. Post-consumer compost waste is, for instance, restaurant waste.

What about a pick your own operation ... while these customers may not be concerned with the GAP certification of the place, if the place picks the fruit as well and this goes to market (a nonhand washed customer may touch a product and not pick it). How does this affect the situation?

This is a real issue. The best way to approach this is to separate the fields that are to go to market from those that are u-pick and audit the fields that are headed to market. If the u-pick is gleaned, it can't be considered GAP certified produce. This beats the alternative of training every u-pick customer.

Are rubber coated shatter proof bulbs (when broken, shards don't fall) adequate?

When new, they are adequate; but over time, the coating tends to deteriorate. If deterioration has occurred, the bulb becomes unacceptable.

If pesticides, oils and the like are stored part of the building and not with the product, is this OK?

They should be stored in a closed cabinet that could contain spillage, should it occur. If there was spill, the pesticides, oils and the like would not reach the product. Examples would be a lower floor level for the closed storage cabinet or a catch pan under the cabinet.

What water test do I need for potable water for GAP certification?

The water test must test for Coliform bacteria and E. coli bacteria.

What is suitable for field maps?

FSA or other accurate maps are fine.

Do growers need MSDS for pesticides as a requirement for GAP?

No, not for GAP. There may be pesticide-related regulations that require this, but not GAP.

Does a grower that sells directly to a school have to be GAP certified?

A grower who sells directly to a school is not covered by Fruit & Vegetable Programs, Commodity Procurement Regulations. They would be regulated by state or county contract regulations or possibly FNS Food and Nutrition Service regulations if the school lunches are subsidized with Federal money. Therefore, a farmer would not be required to have GAP UNLESS the school required it.

How many cows does it take to make a “Feedlot operation”?

Livestock production areas are different from pastures. Livestock production areas have animal densities that do not allow vegetation to grow or precipitation to quickly percolate into the soil or are likely to have wind carry manure particles and dust to crop production areas. These definitions come from EPA regularizations 40 CFR, Part 122.23 of Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO). An AFO operation confines animals for at least 45 days in a 12-month period and there is no grass or other vegetation in the confinement area during the normal growing season. CFOs are AFOs that meet certain EPA criteria.

Do I need potable water to irrigate potatoes?

Chemical applications or irrigation that occur prior to the crop being planted or if the crop is dormant (such as tree fruit) should not require potable water. However chemical or irrigation applications that occur just prior to the crop being harvested must use potable water as the water is coming in direct contact with the edible portion of the crop. Water applied to harvested product should be potable.

How should family members be treated with respect to GAP procedures?

They should be treated the same as employees with respect to GAP procedures.

Are commercially manufactured plastic housing adequate for shielding light bulbs over product flow areas?

Yes.

Can harvester workers have a bottle of water on the machine?

If the bottle is plastic, the water is potable and the bottle is not stored above the product flow zone, yes.

What is potable water?

Water that meets the US public health service drinking water standards (29CFR Part 72) or has been approved the State Department of health.

Are there a mandatory number of traps required for rodent control inside a storage building?

No, but the rodent control program has to be adequate for the facility.