
Food Safety Educational Conference

2010 Southeast Regional Fruit and
Vegetable Conference
Savannah, GA



What's the Difference Between All the Food Safety Audits and Companies

**2010 SE Regional Conference
Savannah, GA**

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GFVGA

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United Fresh Produce Association



United Fresh *Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards*, April 2009

- Many producers and packing facilities undergo numerous audits
 - Different customers require different audit verifications
- Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards first step of discovery
 - What's out there and what's the difference?

United Fresh *Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards*, April 2009

- Government and private-sector audit organizations and standard owners presented overviews of their own systems
 - On-farm produce GAP standards/audits
 - Post-farm gate audit protocols
- The audience was producers and retail/foodservice buyers
 - Those who make the food safety decisions for those organizations

United Fresh *Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards*, April 2009

- Then, over 200 leaders from each stage of the produce supply chain, government, and third-party standard owners and auditors explored the potential value of harmonization and greater alignment of standards

Take Away Message...

- Almost everyone agreed that we need to get back to a true FOOD SAFETY audit
- Anywhere from 80-90% of all audits are the same
 - This is a waste of YOUR time and money.
 - Many producers and packing facility managers are spending hours and days answering the same questions and producing the same documentation

Can We Get to One Audit?

- Many well meaning organizations and industry groups have attempted but always got industry push back
- Why didn't it work?
- Those initiatives seemed to be a small group that tried to conform the industry to their opinions
 - Their opinions aren't bad or wrong

Can We Get to One Audit?

- Answer that seems to work:
- Invite ALL aspects of the industry as well as every individual has to be invited to participate and provide input
- Work in an open and transparent process
- But can we get to ONE food safety audit standard?

2007/8 Joint Comparison Project - Participants



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada



Monachus Consulting

United Fresh Conference – 24 April
2009

Prior Harmonization Efforts

- Guidance documents (FDA GAPs)
- California Leafy Greens Best Practices
- Food Safety Leadership Council
- SQF 1000 produce standards
- AFDO Model Code for Produce Safety
- Tomato “Metrics”
- GlobalGAP
- Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)

Lessons Learned - 1

- While GAP food safety standards are virtually constant, non-food safety objectives are diverse, complicating harmonization efforts. Objective and scope must be defined at the start
- Customers of audit reports must agree that audit criteria cover all critical points
- Deciders of which audit to accept are often different from those who write standards

Lessons Learned - 2

- Scope of auditees must be pre-determined
 - Commodities
 - Growing regions
 - Size of operations
 - Growing, handling practices
- Auditees must agree that audit criteria are reasonable and achievable
- Auditors must agree with both, and be able to perform audit in an effective, reasonable, cost effective process

Lessons Learned - 3

- Process must be inclusive of all stakeholders
- Process must be transparent, open to all, with opportunity for input by all
- No need to “re-invent the wheel”; numerous prior efforts have provided ample raw material, already well thought out and acceptable to some group
- To assure ownership, output must be freely usable by all participants in its development

Lessons Learned - 4

- U.S. agriculture can no longer ignore needs of multinational customers
- GlobalGAP, GFSI, and SQF 1000 have not succeeded with U.S. produce industry, but opportunity exists to work together to achieve common goal
 - GlobalGAP National Technical Working Group

Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative

**Dr. David Gombas
United Fresh Produce Association**





Davis Fresh



Process to Harmonization

Identified a small but influential Steering Committee of major industry representatives with the ability to drive broad industry acceptance of common standards:

- comprised of business leaders who have authority regarding their own companies' supplier audit requirements (i.e., authorized to ultimately accept the harmonized checklist);
- who are committed to achieving the harmonization vision;
- with broad representation from the fresh produce supply chain, including suppliers, distributors, retail and foodservice businesses that have a say in produce suppliers' pre-farm gate food safety requirements;
- who represent a critical mass of volume of produce purchased.

Process to Harmonization

Identified a small but influential Steering Committee of major industry representatives with the ability to drive broad industry acceptance of common standards:

McDonald's

Yum Brands

Pro*Act

U.S. Foodservice

Darden

Jack in the Box

Sysco

Subway

Markon

River Ranch

Del Monte Fresh

Wegmans

Ahold

Kroger

H.E.B.

Safeway

Schnucks

Publix

Walmart

Food Lion

Supervalu

Costco

Chiquita Fresh

Sun World International

DiMare Company

Green Giant Fresh

Sunkist Growers

Castellini Co.

McEntire Produce

Dole Food Company

Tanimura & Antle

The Giumarra Companies

C.H. Robinson

Vision of Harmonization

Develop a harmonized food safety standard and checklist for GAP audits, and globally-acceptable auditing process, necessary to protect consumers from potential hazards that may contaminate produce at that stage of the supply chain, and that will build efficiencies into the supplier audit process.

**One audit by any credible third party,
acceptable to all buyers**

Scope of work (1)

A single, generic checklist for GAP audits:

- Focused on food safety practices of pre-farm gate produce operations (as defined by the scope of the FDA GAPs);
- With clearly defined requirements that minimize opportunity for misunderstanding, misinterpretation and “standards creep” by operations and auditors;
- Globally recognized, but specifically applicable to North America operations;

Scope of work (2)

A single, generic checklist for GAP audits:

- Requirements that are risk-based, science-based, attainable, auditable and verifiable;
- Considering all microbiological, chemical and physical hazards reasonably likely to occur, consistent with potential hazards addressed in FDA regulatory guidances;
- Scalable to all size fresh produce operations;
- Considerate of regional- and commodity-specific food safety needs;
- Sufficiently non-prescriptive to be accepting of equivalent food safety practices;

Scope of work (3)

A single, generic checklist for GAP audits:

- Acceptable to a critical mass of customers requiring general produce food safety audits;
- Freely accessible by everyone, including any 1st, 2nd or 3rd party auditor;
- Flexible to adapt as science reveals better practices and limits.
- Completed draft delivered to Steering Committee by October 1, 2010.

Next Step: Technical Working Group

- Much larger group, representing:
 - customers, suppliers, government, audit companies, association staffs;
 - a broad scope of fresh produce commodities;
 - a broad scope of operation sizes; and
 - a broad scope of producing regions, including Mexico and Canada.
- Open invitation to all stakeholders
- First meeting: November 18/19, Herndon VA

November TWG meeting

- TWG Charter

Technical Working Group (TWG)

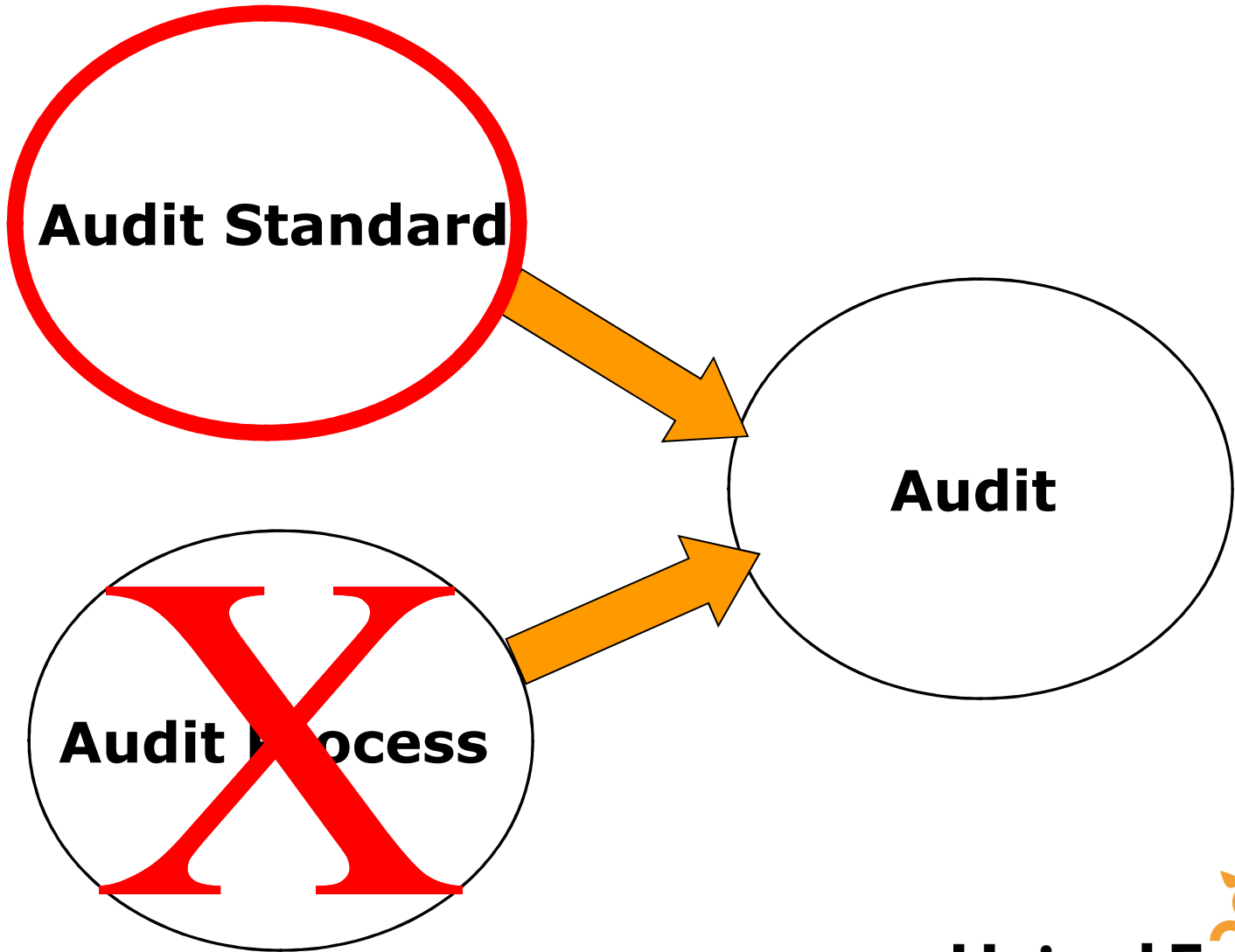
Sponsor

Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative ("GHI") Steering Committee

Sponsors' Direction to the TWG ("Vision")

Develop a harmonized food safety standard and checklist and a globally-acceptable auditing process for GAP audits necessary to protect consumers from potential hazards that may contaminate produce at that stage of the supply chain, and to build efficiencies into the supplier audit process. The overall goal is one audit by any credible third party that can be acceptable to all buyers.

- Focused on food safety practices of pre-farm gate produce operations (as defined by the scope of the FDA GAPs);
- With clearly defined requirements that minimize opportunity for misunderstanding, misinterpretation and "standards creep" by operations and auditors;
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- Requirements that are risk-based, science-based, attainable, auditable and verifiable;
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- Scalable to all size fresh produce operations;
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- Sufficiently non-prescriptive to be accepting of equivalent food safety practices;
- Acceptable to a critical mass of customers requiring general produce food safety audits;



November TWG outcomes

- TWG Charter
- Identification of audit standards to consider in the harmonization

- SQF 1000
- GlobalGAP F&V
- USDA GAP
- SENASICA GAP
- NSF Davis Fresh
- Georgia GAPs
- Mushroom GAPs
- AIB GAP
- SCS GAP
- Silliker GAP
- CA LGMA
- Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for Watermelon
- Primus GAPs v 704
- California Strawberry Industry Food Safety Program
- USDA National Organic Standard (food safety only)
- CanadaGAP Combined Veg
- AFDO Model Code for Produce Safety
- California Tomato Farmers GAP
- Steritech GAP/GHP

November TWG outcomes

- TWG Charter
- Identification of audit standards to consider in the harmonization
- Identification of major, common audit categories

	Criteria (e.g., production blocks are free from history of flooding within the last 60 days)	Site Requirements /Frequency (e.g., annual)	Details (e.g., last 5 years)
Compliance Plan			
a. Management Responsibility			
b. Food Safety Plan or Risk Assessment			
c. Documentation & Verification			
d. SOPs and SSOPs			
e. Review Period			
f. Worker Education and Training			
g. Traceability and Recall Programs			
h. Corrective Actions			
i. Self-audits			
j. Recordkeeping			
Field Production			
a. Management Responsibility			
b. Field History and Assessment			
c. Worker health/hygiene and Toilet/Handwashing Facilities			
d. Ag Chemicals (pesticide, herbicide)			

November TWG outcomes

- TWG Charter
- Identification of audit standards to consider in the harmonization
- Identification of major, common audit categories
- Request audit standard owners to “divide their standards across the matrix” to facilitate comparisons

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- TWG Charter
- Identification of audit standards to consider in the harmonization
- Identification of major, common audit categories
- Request audit standard owners to “divide their standards across the matrix” to facilitate comparisons
- Provide a webpage for information about the Produce GAPs Harmonization Initiative

Former Florida Governor Jeb
Bush to Keynote United Fresh
2010

Registration Opens for United
Fresh 2010

Industry Survey to Provide
Feedback on Produce
Traceability Initiative

Campaign to Grow
PRODUCE POWER
Learn More Here...



Produce for Better Health Foundation



United Fresh Government Relations



Learn more about agriculture policy, food
safety, nutrition, labor and immigration,
and supply chain issues.



Produce GAPs
Harmonization Initiative

United Fresh
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Produce GAPs Harmonization Initiative

Background

Many leaders throughout the produce industry have increasingly recognized the cost and inefficiency of multiple standards and audits now being used to measure compliance with Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs). Neither produce suppliers nor retailers and foodservice companies are well served when duplicative standards and audits raise total supply chain costs without enhancement of overall food safety.

In addition to general business leaders, the United Fresh Produce Association Food Safety & Technology Council, consisting of food safety and quality assurance experts across the supply chain, has looked at a variety of GAP standards and audits in use and under development, and has concluded that there is sound scientific potential for harmonizing basic GAP standards to meet the needs of these many stakeholders.

As a means to further explore the potential and accelerate the possibility for industry-wide commitment to harmonized standards, United Fresh hosted a *Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards* immediately following its annual convention in late April. Some 300 leaders from each stage of the produce supply chain, government, and third-party standard issuers and auditors from around the world

United Fresh News

- ▶ United Fresh Top Stories
- ▶ Member Alerts
- ▶ Press Releases

Policy and Regulatory Issues

Agriculture Policy & Programs

- ▶ 2008 Farm Bill
- ▶ Specialty Crop Block Grants
- ▶ International Trade
- ▶ Country of Origin Labeling
- ▶ AMS Fruit & Vegetable Programs

Food Safety Policy, Technology &

Next Meetings

- February 17-18, Weslaco Research and Extension Center, Weslaco TX
- March 10-11, Taco Bell, Irvine CA
- April 7-8, Darden, Orlando FL
- April 19, The Venetian, Las Vegas NV
- May TBD, US Foodservice, Rosemont IL

Questions?
