



February 16, 2015

RI Good Agricultural Procedures (GAP) workshop – 3/24/2015
RI GAP advanced workshop: Writing a food safety plan - 3/25/2015

TO: All Rhode Island Growers, Farmers Market Managers and School Foodservice Directors

FROM: Lori Pivarnik, URI Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program
Ken Ayars, Chief, Division of Agriculture, RI DEM
Karen Menezes, Division of Agriculture, RIDEM
Sejal Lanterman, CELS/Community Engagement and Outreach Programming

RE: 2015 RI Grower, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Education **MARCH 24, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, Building 75, URI East Farm, Route 108, Kingston**

We are offering our first RI GAP training of 2015. So, we would like to invite RI farmers, Farmers Market Managers and School Foodservice Directors to our **March 24, 2015** GAP training session which will be held at Building 75, URI East Farm, Route 108 in Kingston. This is a great opportunity to learn about any food safety issues that farmers may face growing local food and to familiarize participants regarding what is happening nationwide. Attendance at this training would also be the first step to allow farmers to become RI GAP certified **OR** just a chance to become familiar with what expectations may be if small farmers want to expand or sell to RI schools. It will also allow market managers and foodservice directors understand the expectations of on-farm food safety challenges and expectations. Participants will leave this training with the ability to do their own assessments of their farm practices that will help prevent any food hazards from occurring – never say never!

GAP training will give you important food safety information regardless of whether you choose to become RI GAP certified. This training is about sharing information and resources related to on-farm food safety practices. Refreshments, including coffee/muffins and a lunch, will be served.

The program is based on the FDA/USDA-issued guidelines for producers of fresh fruits and vegetables which are designed to minimize the hazards of microbial contamination in produce. Food safety issues associated with personal hygiene practices of workers, application of compost and manure, sanitation and water quality are addressed in the RI GAP Education and Certification Program. New FDA regulations (part of the Food Safety Modernization Act) will be issued soon; summer/fall 2015 implementation. While we don't know what the final Produce or Prevention/Controls regulations will look like, it is important to be knowledgeable. Whether you are exempt from the regulations or not, this is an opportunity to understand what you can do, proactively, to ensure that the produce you grow and sell is safe for the consumer. For market managers and foodservice directors, it will give you an opportunity to understand the food safety issues facing farmers.

URI Food Safety Education Program/Cooperative Extension and RIDEM Division of Agriculture are committed to offering this valuable program to Rhode Island growers. If you do not need to know the information now, you may need it in the future.

If you choose to become a RI GAP Certified Grower, how does this happen?

- ✓ Participate in the March 24th GAP Training Session. Topics covered include the GAP practices related to: personal hygiene practices of workers including illness and handwashing, sanitation in the field and packinghouse, and water quality.
- ✓ Farm visit(s) by Sejal Lanterman to discuss how you will and/or have implemented RI GAP practices.
- ✓ Successful completion of an on-farm audit conducted by RIDEM Division of Agriculture staff and a 2015 program certificate will be authorized.
- ✓ Complete the required recertification yearly which is a farm visit/audit by RI DEM/Div of Ag.

After successful completion of the audit, you will receive RI GAP promotional materials which include: a Certificate of GAP Certification, consumer brochures, and signs to use wherever you sell your produce. **This is a free service!**

If you choose not to become RI GAP certified, that is okay. Just come to the training and learn. Help will still be available if you have any questions later.

If you have questions about the program and/or would like to attend the training session on **Tuesday, March 24th**, call Lori Pivarnik at 874-2972 or email her at **urifoodsafety@etal.uri.edu**.

To register, complete the registration form attached and mail to: Lori Pivarnik, Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program, Nutrition and Food Sciences Department, 530 Liberty Lane, West Kingston, RI 02892 by **Wednesday, March 11, 2015**. Or you may e-mail her at **urifoodsafety@etal.uri.edu** by **March 11, 2015** with your registration information.

We look forward to seeing you and hope that you will attend.

Mail or E-mail registration information to:

Lori Pivarnik, Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program, Nutrition and Food Sciences Department, 530 Liberty Lane, West Kingston, RI 02892 or e-mail at urifoodsafety@etal.uri.edu by March 11, 2015 with your registration information.

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REGISTRATION FORM March 2015 RIGAP TRAINING SESSIONS
Tuesday, March 24, 2015 9am to 3:30 pm – RI GAP Basics
Wednesday, March 25, 2015 9am to 3:00 pm - Writing a Food Safety Plan

Registration Deadline - Wednesday, March 11, 2015

Name(s) attending_____

Farm_____

Mailing Address_____

Town/City_____State_____Zip Code_____

Daytime Phone_____

Email Address_____

Crops Grown_____

Farm Size (acres) _____

Please check one of the following and indicate number attending:

Number attending

I will be attending March 24, RI GAP Basics only _____

I will be attending March 25, Food Safety Plan only _____

I will be attending both March 24 and 25 _____

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM
NUTRITION AND FOOD SCIENCES
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