



Produce Safety NEWSLETTER

March 2022

NEW FSMA PROPOSED RULE ON AGRICULTURAL WATER

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed new standards regarding agricultural water. The proposed rule, if finalized, would replace the pre-harvest microbial quality criteria and testing requirements in the Produce Safety Rule for covered produce (other than sprouts) with requirements for systems-based, pre-harvest agricultural water assessments to be used for hazard identification and risk management decision-making. Under the proposed requirements, covered farms would be required to conduct pre-harvest agricultural water assessments once annually, and whenever a change occurs that increases the likelihood that a known or reasonably foreseeable hazard will be introduced to produce or food contact surfaces. As part of their pre-harvest agricultural water assessments, these farms would be required to evaluate certain factors that could impact produce safety.

Source: [FDA's Website: FSMA's Proposed Rule on Agricultural Water](#)

JOIN OUR PRODUCE SAFETY EDUCATION TEAM— UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO EXTENSION

University of Idaho Extension is seeking applicants for a full-time, benefitted, Commercial Produce Safety Program Education, Outreach and Technical Assistance Coordinator. The position will be located in Boise, Idaho. The position is funded by the United States (US) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) through a cooperative agreement with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) to address statewide outreach, education and technical assistance related to the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

The Coordinator will be responsible for planning, organizing, instructing, marketing and evaluating Produce Safety Rule training programs and technical assistance for produce growers, Extension Educators and regulatory personnel statewide.

Required qualifications will include:

- Bachelor's degree in Food Science, Microbiology, Horticulture, Environmental Science, Agricultural Science, Education, or a closely related discipline with relevant food safety or industry work experience.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule, Good Agricultural Practices, on-farm food safety and agricultural production of horticulture and specialty crops.

To Apply for this position, [click here!](#)

Please contact Ariel Agenbroad with any inquiries or questions. Email ariel@uidaho.edu or call 208-287-5900.

FDA ASSESSMENT BUILDER

FDA has launched a new user-friendly online builder to help farms understand the proposed rule requirements for an agriculture water assessment. If finalized, the proposed rule would require farms to conduct system-based agricultural water assessments to determine and guide appropriate measures to minimize potential risks associated with pre-harvest agricultural water. The builder prompts users to answer questions and fill in information specific to their farms. Information entered into the tool is not shared with the FDA and will not be saved. Users can save or print the information to your personal computer. To access the tool, [click here!](#)

REGISTER TODAY!

Produce Safety Webinar Series 2022

Tuesdays in April @ 11am—12pm MST

University of Idaho's webinar series assists growers in implementing food safety practices and preparing for a successful inspection. Topics were selected based on direct feedback from Idaho Producers.

April 5: Effective Worker Training Part 1:
Principles of Adult Learning

April 12: REPLAY from 2021: Managing Pests
in Enclosed Buildings

April 19: Effective Worker Training Part 2:
What Works for Your Farm

April 26: It's NOT for the Birds: Strategies for
Avian Pest Management

For more information and to Register:

[Click Here](#)

Webinars are free, but pre-registration is required to receive a link to the live webinar and access to recorded webinars.

Questions? Contact Ariel Agenbroad at

ariel@uidaho.edu

PUBLIC COMMENT ENDS SOON!

Idaho is asking growers to share their thoughts, concerns, or approvals on the proposed rule before the public comment period ends. You can contribute your thoughts here:

[Public Comment](#)

Your opportunity to comment ends on **April 5, 2022**

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Below are links of previous webinars or recorded meetings to help understand the proposed rule.

[12/17/21 FDA Webinar](#)

[2/14/22 Public Meeting Recording](#)

[2/25/22 Public Meeting Recording](#)

[3/2/22 NASDA FDA Proposed Ag Water Rule](#)

PROGRAM UPDATE

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) Produce Safety Program is continually working to verify all farms throughout Idaho. If your farm has not been verified, please begin the process of doing so by filling out our verification form on our website by [clicking here](#). The verification form can be returned using any of the contact information provided on the form. Once ISDA has been able to verify your farm's information, we will send you a corresponding letter, for your records, based on your farm's status with regard to the Produce Safety Rule. Even farms that know they are currently not covered should verify their farms status with ISDA. By doing so, ISDA will be able to issue an official letter for record, issue correspondence to specific farms in the event of a rule change that may impact certain farms or remove farms from future contact lists.

Contact Information:

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2022 INSPECTION UPDATE

Over the previous three years ISDA has conducted inspections on Large, Small and Very Small farms throughout Idaho. As a result of completing these initial inspections, ISDA has established compliance history and completed a risk assessment of farms throughout Idaho. 2022 inspections will be prioritized in accordance with this information. ISDA will begin reaching out to farms to schedule an inspection soon. In the meantime, ISDA encourages farms to continue using good agricultural practices at all times in preparation for future inspections. At this time, the Agricultural Water portion is still under review. If the proposed rule changes are finalized, ISDA in collaboration with University of Idaho Extension will notify farms and offer educational opportunities such as On-Farm Readiness Reviews to help farms prepare for compliance.