

C A L I F O R N I A WALNUT NEWS



SPRING 2017



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FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT (FSMA) AND WALNUT GROWERS

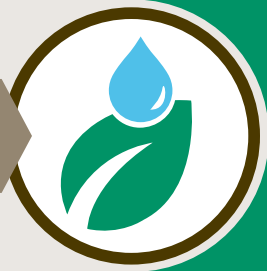
The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was signed into law in 2011. FDA released two important pieces of this law, the Produce Safety rules for growers and the Preventive Controls rules for processors in Fall 2015. FSMA aims to ensure the U.S. food supply is safe by shifting the focus

of federal regulators from responding to contamination to preventing it and represents a first significant revamp of food safety rules in decades.

In this article, we are going to take a look at some key requirements of the Produce Safety rule affecting growers. The California Walnut Commission and Board will be partnering with Safe Food Alliance to offer regional in-depth FSMA trainings, so the stakeholders we represent are better prepared to meet FSMA requirements. The details of these trainings can be found on page 3.

PRODUCE SAFETY (GROWER RULES)

1. Agricultural Water



Water Quality: Water that comes into contact with the produce, used for equipment sanitation or employee handwashing is considered 'agricultural water' and subject to testing requirements. The criteria for water testing is:

- The Geometric Mean of samples is 126 or less CFU of generic E.coli per 100 mL of water with no single sample exceeding 410 CFU per 100 mL of water. It is important to note that in case of a positive test, FDA will allow for a 'microbial die off' period before resuming the water use. Previously, the grower would have been unable to use the water until a subsequent negative test.

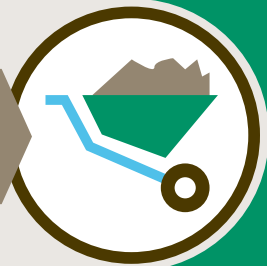
2. Water Testing Frequency



Untreated Surface Water: 20 samples in the first 2-4 years to establish a baseline; 5 samples every year thereafter.

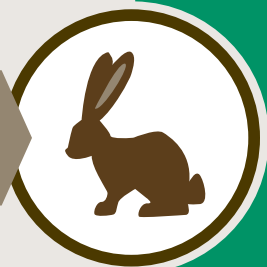
Untreated Ground Water: 4 samples in the first year to establish a baseline; minimum 1 sample every year thereafter.

3. Compost or Organic Soil Amendments



The FDA deferred to the National Organic Program (NOP) rules for using raw manure or compost. Raw manure will follow a 90 or 120 day pre-harvest interval depending on whether the manure comes in contact with the produce or not. Certified compost does not have a pre-harvest interval.

4. Domesticated and Wild Animals



FDA notes that growers should take reasonable care to avoid intrusion of domestic and/or wild animals during harvest. However, farms are not required to exclude animals from outdoor growing areas, destroy animal habitat, or clear borders around growing or drainage areas. Nothing in the rule should be interpreted as requiring or encouraging such actions.

5. Worker Training and Health and Hygiene



Farm workers who handle produce and/or food-contact surfaces, and their supervisors, must be trained on certain topics, including the importance of health and hygiene and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

COMPLIANCE DATES

- **VERY SMALL BUSINESSES**, those with more than \$25,000 but no more than \$250,000 in average annual produce sales during the previous three year period: **January 2020**
- **SMALL BUSINESSES**, those with more than \$250,000 but no more than \$500,000 in average annual produce sales during the previous three year period: **January 2019**
- **ALL OTHER FARMS:** **January 2018**
- The compliance dates for water quality standards allow an additional two years beyond each of these compliance dates for the rest of the final rule.

It should also be noted that FDA has clarified the definition of 'farm' to cover 'Primary Production Farm' i.e. a typical growing operation, and 'Secondary Activities Farm', which may be located further away from the main farm and carry out similar activities as well as produce storage, hulling and drying, and basic processing. The most direct impact for the walnut industry is the designation of huller/dehydrators. If a grower owns a huller/dehydrator, it is classified as part of the farm and subject to Produce Safety rules. However, commercial huller/dehydrators with no owner stake of at least 51% will be classified as a processor and fall under the Preventive Controls rule.



TRAINED INDIVIDUAL

One of the FSMA requirements is that at least one person per farm undergo an approved FSMA Produce Safety training course. The California Walnut Board is pleased to announce a partnership with Safe Food Alliance to offer this official Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Training. This Produce Safety Training is exclusive to walnut growers only. The California Walnut Board is offering one complimentary registration per grower to the first 260 growers to register. Apply discount code PSCWB2017 at checkout. The training course lasts 8 hours and would normally cost \$ 285/person.

For further details, please visit the links below

May 1, 2017 (CHICO):

<https://safefoodalliance.com/events/produce-safety-training-2/>

May 8, 2017 (STOCKTON):

<https://safefoodalliance.com/events/produce-safety-training-3/>

June 13, 2017 (TULARE):

<https://safefoodalliance.com/events/produce-safety-training-4/>

The California Farm Bureau is also planning on having similar regional trainings. For more information, please contact the Farm Bureau.

(Reference: FDA <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/>)



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UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

CALIFORNIA WALNUT BOARD & CALIFORNIA WALNUT COMMISSION

► **California Walnut Board & California Walnut Commission
Annual Spring Meeting**

Wednesday, May 31, 2017

Marriott Rancho Cordova

Please contact Dana at (916) 932-7070 for more information.



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