



FOOD QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM
(410) 841-5769 FAX (410) 841-2750
MDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Program

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has developed a food safety program for direct marketers of fresh fruit and vegetables. The program is designed to minimize the risk of microbial contamination through good production practices and is based on guidance developed by the US Food and Drug Administration. Program requirements are updated annually to meet current buyer and regulatory requirements.

Program Requirements

1. Attend an approved GAP training program. MDA and the University of Maryland offer producer training sessions regionally January through March each year. Other University and/or State Department of Agriculture GAP training programs are acceptable.
2. Complete a self assessment using the National GAPS Program Self Assessment Checklist or University of Maryland Checklist.
3. Develop a written food safety plan that addresses any risks identified in the self assessment. Assistance in developing the plan is available through a joint project of MDA and the University of MD. For assistance, contact Justine Beaulieu, 2125 Plant Sciences Building, College Park, MD 20742-4452, 301-405-7543, jbeauli1@umd.edu.
4. Implement the food safety plan.
5. Contact MDA's Food Quality Assurance Program at 410-841-5769 or Deanna.Baldwin@maryland.gov to schedule an inspection to verify the plan adequately addresses food safety risks and has been implemented.
6. MDA will issue a Certificate of Compliance to producers that pass the inspection. A list of producers that have been issued a Certificate of Compliance is maintained on MDA's website – www.mda.maryland.gov.