Small Farm Food Safety, Fresh Produce: Part 1: Introduction to the PACE Principles

Brian Lapinski, Amy Simonne and M.E. Swisher

Time required: 10 minutes

Materials for Trainer

- Computer with PowerPoint, LCD projector, screen
- “Keep P.A.C.E!” (Power Point slides)*

Advance Preparation for Trainer


Additional Resources

- “Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Melon Supply Chain, 1st Ed.”:
  http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~acrobat/melonsup.pdf
- “Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Fresh Tomato Supply Chain, 1st Ed.”:
  http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~acrobat/tomatsup.pdf
- “Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Lettuce and Leafy Greens Supply Chain, 1st Ed.”:
  http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~acrobat/lettsup.pdf

Materials for Participants

- None

Objectives

Introduce the idea of food safety on the farm through an overview of the P.A.C.E principles.

1. This document is FCS8842, one of a series of the Family, Youth and Community Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date October 2007. Visit the EDIS Web Site at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.
2. Brian Lapinski, graduate student, Amy Simonne, associate professor, and M.E. Swisher, associate professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.
Small Farm Food Safety: Fresh Produce

Development Team
Amy H. Simonne
Mickie E. Swisher
Brian Lapinski

Video/DVD Production
Bill Kelsey
Al Williamson
Roger Burnham

Procedure

Present the slides and lead a discussion of the key principles that they illustrate. Make sure to discuss the key points indicated. Encourage engagement in the learning process by asking participants to comment on their own experiences.

• Title

• Credits

• Each letter in PACE represents an important idea for reducing microbial contamination.

• Current technologies cannot eliminate all potential food safety hazards associated with fresh produce that will be eaten raw.

• Therefore, our aim is risk reduction, not risk elimination.

• The first PACE principle is prevention.

• Prevention is a philosophy and mindset that we can lose easily when our lives are too busy.

• Relying on corrective actions alone is not good enough. Fixing a problem usually takes more time than preventing the problem in the first place.

• If we fail to prevent contamination, we make more work for ourselves in the long run and we are more likely to suffer legal consequences.

• The second PACE principle is accountability.

• Accountability is key at all levels of the agricultural environment: the farm, the packing facility, the distribution center, and the transportation system.

• Qualified personnel and effective monitoring are critical for ensuring that every element of the food safety program functions correctly.
The third PACE principle is control.

Today's agricultural operations rely on an increasingly specialized and segmented network of suppliers and distributors.

Many factors affect the ecosystems where farms are located.

Producer must be knowledgeable about both the human and the environmental factors that affect their farms and do their best to minimize their contribution to microbial contamination.

The fourth PACE principle is education.

Worker hygiene and sanitation practices during production, harvesting, sorting, packing and transport play a critical role in minimizing the potential for microbial contamination.

Everyone involved must be educated and held accountable for worker hygiene and sanitation.