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ARKANSAS AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION
ARKANSAS LIVESTOCK & POULTRY COMMISSION
ARKANSAS STATE PLANT BOARD

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SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

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Produce Safety Program to Train Arkansas Producers on Required Compliance Standards

LITTLE ROCK, AR – Beginning in January of 2018, producers will have new compliance standards through the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule. The FSMA is a federal act that requires producers and processors of fresh fruits and vegetables to implement certain controls to prevent contamination of our nation’s food system.

The Arkansas Agriculture Department (ADD) has received grant funding from the Food and Drug Administration to educate Arkansas producers about the new Produce Safety Rule requirements and establish a regulatory oversight and enforcement program. The AAD has contracted with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service to provide education and outreach opportunities about the new program for producers.

“The initial focus will be on education and compliance assistance. AAD inspectors along with Extension personnel will perform on farm readiness reviews for the purpose of assisting farmers with compliance issues. AAD program activities will gradually move from compliance assistance reviews to regulatory inspections and enforcement actions if warranted,” explains Scott Bray, Plant Industry Division Manager.

Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez, assistant professor for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, will coordinate Produce Safety Program outreach efforts. “My job will be teaching Arkansas producers about the requirements and how to obtain certification and meet the goals of this act, specifically the Produce Safety Rule,” she says.

Training locations and dates are listed below. Attendees must register to attend. Please visit this website for registration: www.uaex.edu/arkansas-produce-safety. Contact Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez at aperez@uaex.edu for questions on the Produce Safety Program and upcoming training.

- Nov. 7: Central – Little Rock at 4-H Center
- Dec. 6: Eastern – Forrest City at East Arkansas Community College
- Dec. 11: Northwest – Fayetteville at Don Tyson Ag Science Center
- Jan. 9: Southeast – Monticello at UA Monticello
- Jan. 16: Southwest – Hope at SWREC

A survey is available to help producers and processors determine how their farms will be affected by the Produce Safety Rule, here: www.uaex.edu/arkansas-produce-safety

Producers of fruits and vegetables that are sold and consumed raw (i.e. lettuce, apples, etc.), that grow more than \$25,000 per year, will be required to complete specialized Produce Safety Rule training and implement new standards. Training will be voluntary to all other producers, but is highly encouraged as part of good farm management practices.





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The Produce Safety Program is a collaborative effort in Arkansas between the Arkansas Agriculture Department and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. This educational outreach is supported in part by the Food and Drug Administration through grant PAR-16-137. The views expressed don't necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does the mention of any trade names, commercial practices, or organization imply endorsement by the United States Government.

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