Farm Food Safety: strategies to help travel the road to Certification

October, 2019

Elsie Friesen – Food Safety Provenance Education Specialist
Ministry of Agriculture / Industry Development
Historical Context: *Old Legislation, Recalls, & Food Safety*

**The Old Way**

• The old Legislation
  • limited to certain commodities,
  • primary criteria for crops was ‘Grading’;
  • inspections limited to end of food chain;
  • No inspections of on-farm good agricultural practises (GAPs)

**The New Way**

• **RECALLS** – industry took on the role of setting GAP Standards using Audits as verification

• **USFDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)**
  • Food Safety Rules;
  • Foreign Suppler Verification Rule;
  • Third Party Certification Rule

**The Food Chain**

- Agriculture
- Transportation
- Processing
- Retail Store
- Restaurant
Poll Question:

*(who is on the webinar?)*

- As an attendee are you:
  1. A producer?
  2. An advisor or consultant?
  3. A government employee wanting to learn more about GAP?
WHY should hazards and risks matter to producers/growers?
Unknowingly...
Consumers paid the RISK price

- *Listeriosis* deaths of 33 and 147 illnesses, and one miscarriage in 28 states (Summer, 2011)
- **One out of 5 died**

- 2008 widespread outbreak of *listeriosis* in Canada linked to cold cuts from a Maple Leaf Foods plant in Toronto. There were 57 total confirmed cases, resulting in 22 deaths
- **One out of 2.5 (two out of 5) died**
2018 Food Recalls Year in Review (USA)
Ref: Food Industry Council LLC / Shawn K. Stevens - Lawyer

- Total Recalls: 684 with 125 USDA Agricultural Food Recalls
- Recall Reason: 213 Pathogen-related
- Total known wgt. of 460 recalls = 124,003,277 lbs
- Average wgt. (with 2 largest removed): 70,339 lbs

124 MILLION LBS =
- 5,000 SCHOOL BUSES
- 200 BOEING 747s
- 7.5 EIFFEL TOWERS
- 30,000 CARS
- 8,500 T-REXS
Goal of Certification = Prevent a Recall

- Federal officials found numerous food safety violations at Jensen Farms, even though the facility got a 96-percent (or superior) rating, saying it met or exceeded established cantaloupe production standards.
- Is the ‘audit’ a true test of how well good agricultural practices are implemented?
Olympian Strategy: #1

Learn the Standards of the game

1. Take time to understand the rules of the game
   • It is Buyer driven
   • Standard Practices developed by Industry based on science
   • Sampling methods
   • Risk Assessments along with Corrective Actions
   • Traceability
   • A Yearly event - Audits do not carry over

2. This applies to producers, advisors, auditors, policy makers
Which Standard to learn?

1. The Basics:
   BC Good Agricultural Practices (on website)

2. Industry Standards:
   15 different commodities reviewed by CFIA & provinces, for example:
   - Verified Beef
   - Start Clean – Stay Clean (Egg)
   - Canadian Trucking Alliance
   - Canadian Bee Industry
   - CanadaGAP – for Fresh Fruits & Vegetables, and Greenhouse
   Alternatives:
   - International Standards – Primus, Global G.A.P., SQF, etc.

3. CFIA – based on Safe Food for Canadians Act & Regulation:
   you are required to write a Prevention Control Plan when selling outside of your province or exporting to another country
Olympian Strategy: #2

Learn about the Competition:

hurdles/hazards that cause your defeat

But...we always wash our vegetables?
Media HEADLINES are NOT Kind to the losers

Recalled produce

Financial Devastation

Confusion, Shock...

Loss of Farm And Income

Death of Consumers

Reduced Market Confidence
As a producer do you know:

- How safe is your irrigation water? **AND** how safe is another grower's irrigation water?
- Are your pickers using proper hygiene? **AND** do other producers follow your Standard of hygiene rules?
- Where does your product end up? **AND** with what other products does it have cross-contact with?
- Do you know how your products are used by processors?
Olympian Strategy: #3

Use the ‘Olympic-mindset’ of determination

- **Network**: attend workshops, LMHIA Short Course, webinars, etc.
- Use positive mind-talk of ‘Benefits’ to motivate you to look for better performance levels and for when the going gets tough

Benefits of Implementing Food Safety

- Markets /Trade/Reputations stay robust and sustainable as consumers trust and show confidence in buying B.C. food products
- Indicates your accountability and responsible leadership to consumers, bankers, insurance agents, your fellow producers
- Successful audits are based on producer implementation of best practices developed from science-based research
- Gaining the Certification through audits - creates positive news media stories which support the B.C food safety reputation

“Grow BC – Feed BC – Buy BC”
SUCCESSFUL FOOD SAFETY HEADLINES

B.C Agri & Seafood Teams WIN

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

BEST LEADERSHIP

CanadaGAP @461 successful audits

GLOBAL REPUTATION

Proof of Provenance (Origin) = Food Safety starts on the FARM

Robust, Sustainable Markets
Olympian Strategy: #4

Use ‘technology’ to your advantage to improve your practices which affect audit score

- Make a video of your SOPs
- Invest in software to electronically record and keep your records (e.g. FCC Field Manager)
- Learn about new innovative ideas
Learn new best practices and explore other resources
Olympian Strategy: #5

Training practices take place during off-season – reduce stress during busy season

- Preparation during the off-season pays off big during harvest
- Build a To Do List (when to do water sampling, maintenance programs,)
- Stay up-to-date on changes (e.g. CanadaGAP = February)
Olympian Strategy: #6

Olympic Champions use Team support to ensure they achieve the Podium Goal

Food Safety Certification

Congratulations!
2018 B.C. Growers Achieved CanadaGAP Certification = 461+
Learn how to access your Team for help

- Packers / Consultant
- BC Growers
- Ministry: Regional P.Ag Specialists
- Industry Associations
- CAP Programs = Funding $$$

Ministry of Agriculture
Food Safety Certification?

Your proof of preventive practices

STOPs a Recall from happening

1. Understand the rules of the Standard you are using
2. Learn Risk Assessments & Corrective Actions that beat your competition
3. Keep a positive mind-set
4. Use innovative technologies to your advantage
5. Work on it during the off-season
6. Get to know your team for support options
Poll Question:  
*(was this of value?)*

- Your evaluation of this webinar?
  1. Yes, as a producer I will start the path to Certification.
  2. NO, as a producer I am not ready for Certification – I need more information.
  3. As someone interested to support agriculture, I did experience an ‘ah ha’ regarding farm food safety.
Thank You

Need help in:
1. Finding a workshop?
2. Applying for funding?
3. Preparing for an audit?

AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca
1-888-221-7141