

BIOSECURITY / SECURITY CHECKLIST
for the Farmer, Operator, Broker

Wholesale Produce Industry

**Biosecurity and security are part of an all-hazards approach to
Agriculture Safety**

BE PREPARED

- Create a Biosecurity plan for your Wholesale Produce operation, to be included with your Emergency Plan.
 - Utilize Cornell University's *Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower Self Assessment of Food Safety Risks* (www.GAPs.cornell.edu) for additional information.
 - Utilize the FDA's *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* (<http://www.fda.gov>)
 - Contact the New Jersey Department of Agriculture-Division of Marketing and Development at 609-292-5575 to schedule a voluntary "Third Party Certification" to attest to your voluntary adherence to this Guide and demonstrating adherence with GAPs & GHPs.
 - For assistance with these plans, contact the New Jersey Department of Agriculture – Division of Markets at 609-292-5575.

BE ALERT

- Talk with your county Emergency Management Coordinator. Let him/her know about your operation's needs and concerns in the event of a disaster or an emergency. Learn about your county's disaster and emergency evacuation procedures and incorporate the following into your plan:
 - Understand the hazards/risks associated with your area.
 - Depending on the size of your operations, develop plans on how to and where to evacuate your workers.
 - Understand how to shelter-in-place.
 - Develop procedures to implement if there is a breach in security concerning your operations.
- Develop a list of important phone numbers, with contact names, such as the following: (keep at an on-site and off-site location)
 - Police / Fire / EMS: 9-1-1

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BE ALERT (continued)

- Local Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension Agent
 - County Emergency Management Coordinator
 - NJ Dept. of Agriculture – Division of Markets (609-292-5575)
 - NJ Dept. of Agriculture – 24-hour number (609-292-8896)
 - Local Department of Health
 - Emergency Notification List, including after hours numbers (e.g. owner, supervisors, workers, vendors, suppliers, etc.). Include a list of essential employees allowed access to the facility during emergencies.
- Maintain awareness of the location of visitors and vendors.
 - Post signs informing visitors where to park and where to report.
 - Maintain visitor's log and escort all visitors, including delivery personnel, service support, etc., while on premises.
 - Restrict access to key processing, packaging, storage or holding areas.
 - Notify authorities of people taking unauthorized pictures or asking questions about operations, security, hazardous materials, etc.
 - Watch for and report signs of tampering with equipment, food, hazardous materials, water, buildings and utilities.
 - Implement a security plan and have written procedures on step to take if you suspect of find evidence of contamination, tampering or theft.
 - Ensure your finished products are properly packaged and labeled for traceability.
 - Have a recall/trace back plan with provisions for notification and recall of products that have been shipped or sold.
 - Watch for unusual signs that may indicate possible bioterrorism:
 - Unusually high number of unhealthy or dead plants.
 - Abnormal or unusual signs not typically seen for a particular disease.
 - Disease occurrence outside of its normal expected season.
 - Multiple outbreaks across different plant species.
 - Multiple cases of workers with a mysterious illness, rash, or other signs.
 - Talk with your Extension Agent to become familiar with the signs of the various plant diseases/pests, recognize the signs of pesticide exposure, etc.
 - Maintain situational awareness of on-going threats.
 - Train employees to be alert, vigilant with their surroundings, and who to notify if they see suspicious activity.

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BE SECURE

- ❑ Establish Standard Operating Procedures for all areas of your operations.
- ❑ Ensure the physical security of buildings and grounds.
 - Limit access to your operations – consider utilizing perimeter fencing with controlled gate access, electronic security devices, and industrial-type door hardware.
 - Maintain adequate internal/external lighting.
 - Keep processing/packaging areas, refrigerators/freezers, and storage areas locked when not in use.
 - Restrict access to fertilizer and chemical storage areas.
- ❑ Limit access to the water/electrical supply, if applicable.
 - If feasible, secure them to prevent tampering.
- ❑ Install a security policy and security measures for deliveries.
 - Purchase from known, reputable firms or individuals.
 - Restrict deliveries to scheduled appointments and have your representative present for all deliveries.
 - Maintain accurate records of products.
- ❑ Maintain up-to-date inventories, especially on perishable products and hazardous materials. Investigate discrepancies immediately.
 - Keep invoices on file.
 - Inspect storage areas routinely and watch for signs of theft and evidence of tampering.
- ❑ Conduct pre-employment screening on all prospective employees.
- ❑ Keep vehicles and equipment locked and keys secured, when not in use.
 - Monitor vehicles for inappropriate contents or unauthorized/unusual activity.
- ❑ Restrict access to computers and sensitive documents.
 - Protect computer data with virus protection.
- ❑ Shred sensitive documents before discarding.
- ❑ Train employees to be secure and notify you if they detect a breach in security.

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BE CLEAN

- ❑ Limit access to sensitive areas and enforce visitors/vendors to follow posted rules.
 - Do not take visitors to preparation, packing or storage areas, unless appropriately supervised.
- ❑ Keep chemicals and hazardous materials separate from consumable products.
- ❑ Follow sanitary practices to eliminate the spread of disease. This applies to people, as well as equipment.
 - Implement a written housekeeping program.
 - Utilize potable water for washing, cooling/ice.
 - Water-contact and food contact surfaces are cleaned/sanitized on a scheduled basis.
 - Implement a written rodent/pest control program.
- ❑ Provide field sanitation and hand-washing facilities.
 - Encourage hand washing with disinfectant soap, especially after using the restroom/field sanitation facilities, handling hazardous materials, etc.
- ❑ Train employees on common disease signs and patterns.
- ❑ Train employees to be clean and to notify you if they see discrepancies.

BE CURRENT

- ❑ Practice emergency drills with your employees and review proper response procedures.
- ❑ Review and update your plan every year and if necessary, after each drill.

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NOTIFY/CALL

- ❑ If you suspect suspicious activity, call local law enforcement & 1-866-4-SAFE-NJ.
- ❑ If you notice unusual signs of disease or pests in agricultural products, notify the Local Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension Agent and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture.
- ❑ If you notice workers and/or customers unexpectedly getting sick, notify the local health department and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture.
- ❑ Train employees to notify you if there are concerns/problems.
 - If tampering/contamination are suspected, isolate the suspected food/product and remove workers from the area.
 - Monitor food and facilities until authorities arrive.
- ❑ Train your employees on your plan and to Be Alert, Be Secure, Be Clean and Notify/Call.