



## Kitchen Table Produce Safety

### A plan-writing work session for farmers on the go!

This year, with coordination from UVM Extension, the **Vermont Vegetable and Berry Grower's Association (VVBGA)** is developing their own **Produce Safety Accreditation** for its members.

With the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) set to drive market and consumer expectations, the purpose of VVBGA's Accreditation is to proactively establish a consistent, practical approach for Vermont produce farmers to reduce food safety risks and to maintain market credibility even if they are exempt from complying with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

This work session is specifically designed for VVBGA member farmers who want to write a [Practical Produce Safety Plan](#) QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY, with immediate feedback and without having to drive far to a workshop. These work-sessions are small (2-5 farmers) and are convened on demand, as schedule and interest allows. If potential participants would like to learn about risks and best practices in addition to writing a PPS plan, they should register for a day-long Practical Produce workshops through the Center for Sustainable Agriculture <http://www.uvm.edu/sustainableagriculture/?Page=whatwedo/producesafety/PPSManual.html>

To schedule a session in your area contact Hans Estrin at [hestrin@uvm.edu](mailto:hestrin@uvm.edu) or 802-257-7967. To request a disability-related accommodation to participate in this program, please contact Hans at least 3 weeks in advance of the session so we may assist you.

#### Work session Overview

As a participant, you will

- **Convene a work session** by joining with one to four more farms in your area who would like to participate and scheduling a time with UVM's Hans Estrin ([hestrin@uvm.edu](mailto:hestrin@uvm.edu), 802 380 2109)
- Log on and get a **start drafting your plan** from a template before the session begins!
- **Provide a kitchen table** or other work space where participants can meet.
- **Draft your plan around the "kitchen table" during a 2-3 hour session** with a UVM Extension professional, who will meet you with lap tops (upon request) and refreshments, and answer questions and provide feedback.

By the end of this workshop, you will have logged onto the VVBGA's program and finished a **practical produce safety plan** with **specific action-steps** needed to implement it on your farm.

#### Why have a Practical Produce Safety Plan?

Even if you do not become accredited or end up becoming GAP certified, this plan clarifies the specific meaning of food safety on your farm. The plan has no legal or regulatory authority, but it can be used to train your employees or can be shared with interested retail customers, local, and wholesale buyers. The workshop is appropriate for both organic and conventional growers, and is a great way to begin VVBGA's accreditation process.

**Note:** *Although this work-session lays the foundation to help you prepare for a Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) audit certification, it is designed for small, diversified farmers who do not intend to become GAP certified in the near future. The work-session is appropriate for both organic and conventional growers. Please contact Ginger Nickerson at [gnickers@uvm.edu](mailto:gnickers@uvm.edu) if you are seeking assistance in creating a food safety plan for a GAPs*