How to comment:

**Don’t get overwhelmed and feel you have to comment on every item!** If you can only comment on one proposed, just do that. It is better to do less and do something than not comment at all!

**Draft your comments ahead of time.** The Federal Register site will time out if you are not active, so it is easiest to write your comments in a separate word document and then cut and paste them into the Federal Register, or write your comments and attach them as a separate document. There is a 5,000 character limit if you type into the boxes, but no limit if you attach a separate document.

Federal Registrar page: http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=FDA-2011-N-0921-0199

1. Click on the “Comment Now!” button on the right-hand side of the page.
2. Double-check that you are commenting on the correct rule – on the next page, if you are commenting on the Produce Rule, it will say: Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption; Extension of Comment
3. After submitting your comments there will be a series of informational questions to fill out. You can preview and edit your comments before clicking on "submit"
4. Click “Submit Comment” to officially submit your comment to FDA.
5. After your comment is successfully submitted a screen will appear with a confirmation number for your comment.

**Elements of a Strong Comment:**

In a few sentences, introduce yourself and your farm or your relationship with farmers (name and location, size and type of farm (e.g. are you diversified, types of enterprises, do you have livestock as well as produce, how do you sell your produce). Remember your comments are public information and will be available for anyone to access. Do not share any information you wish to keep confidential. You can remain anonymous.

Do not just say a rule would be a bad idea. Give specific examples of how a proposed rule would affect your business or community- (how farms irrigate, how much you rely on using raw manure ). Wherever possible use any numbers that you have (number of employees, customers)

Assume officials reading your comments do not know anything about how small-scale diversified farms and the Northeast food system works. Use this opportunity to educate them about your business's/local farms' role in the local food system and economy.
Offer alternative solutions that could work for your operation.

If there is an aspect of the rule you like – be sure to say that!