



# **NECAFS Conference**

**January 10, 2017**

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# What does VAAFM do?

1. **Conduct USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) audits**
2. **Regulate apples, potatoes & strawberries (retail & farmers market inspections)**
3. **Regulate on-farm pesticide use and provide applicator training**
4. **Provide guidance to VVBGA CAPS development (& pilot audits)**
5. **Deliver education & technical assistance focused on regulatory literacy**
6. **Conduct On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRR)**



# Vermont Produce Program Development

**2015**

- **Initiate stakeholder & industry outreach**
- **Develop relationships with FDA and National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)**

**2016**

- **Obtain expanded statutory authority at the state legislature**
- **Obtain resources for program from FDA & hire staff**
- **Develop education, outreach & training**
- **Seek guidance from industry advisory group**

**2017**

- **Develop regulatory program framework**
- **Hire & train inspection staff**
- **Pilot On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRR)**
- **Continue to work with federal, state & industry partners**

**2018**

- **Continue to deliver OFRR and technical assistance**
- **Launch Capital Infrastructure Grant Program**
- **Begin mandatory inspections for farms with \$500,000+ in annual produce sales**

# 5 Year FDA Cooperative Agreement Program Components

## **Outreach, Education & Technical Assistance**

- Staff: 2 positions focused on outreach & education
- Collaboration with UVM Extension
- Grower training
- On-Farm Readiness Reviews

## **Compliance**

- Staff: 3 inspectors by 2019
- Inspections for fully covered farms beginning in 2018
- Facilitate implementation of water testing requirements

# Upcoming Collaboration

## December 2016

- Technical Service Providers Meeting

## January–May 2017

- VVBGA Annual Meeting
- Advisory Group Meeting
- NOFA-VT Winter Conference
- Buyer/Distributor Meeting
- Large Stakeholder Meeting
  - *Growers, Service Providers, Buyers/Distributors, Associations, Advocacy Organizations*
- National Consortium for Produce Safety Program Development

## June 2017

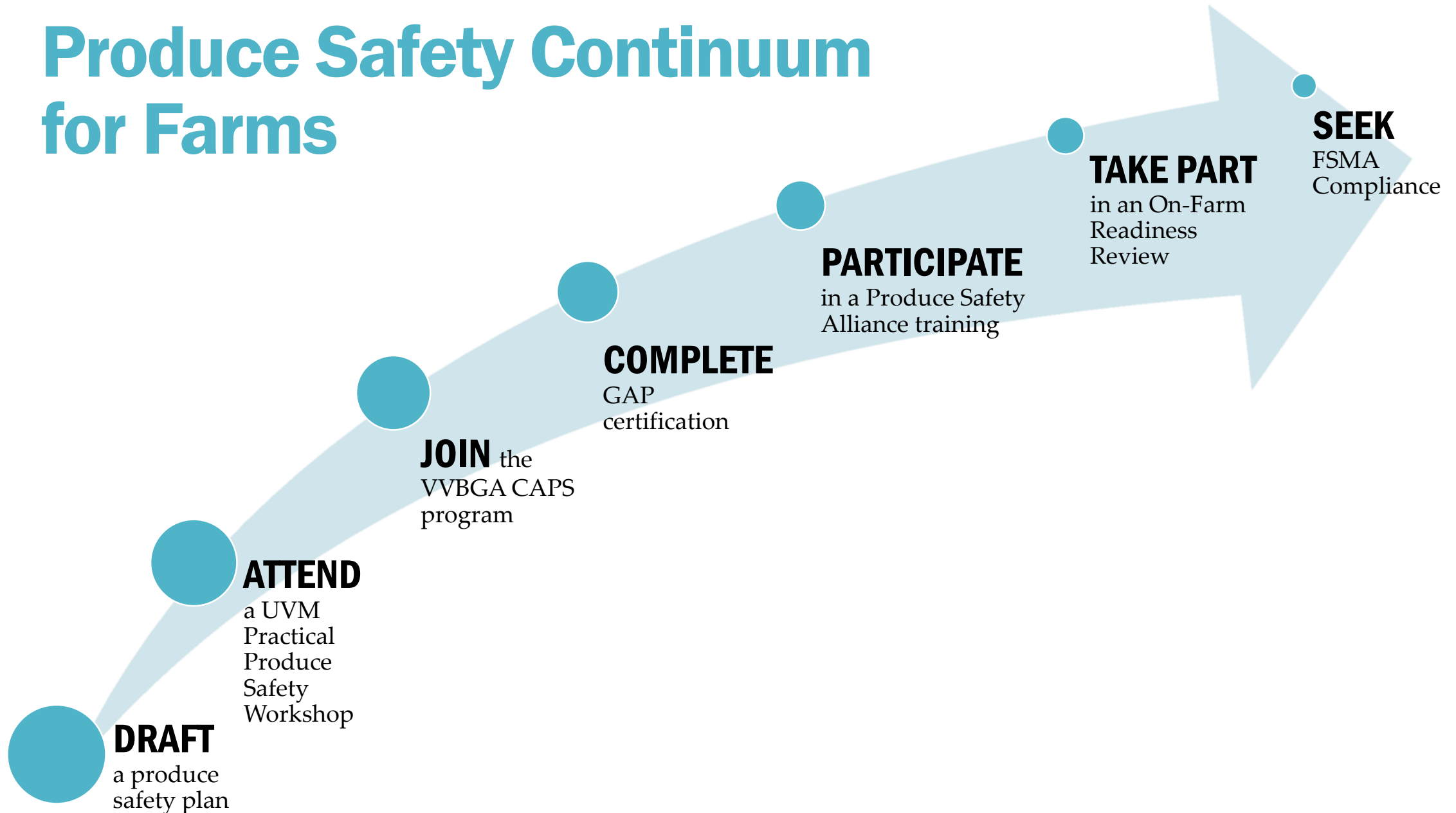
- Vermont On-Farm Readiness Review Pilot

# Mission Statement

The Vermont Produce Program will help to grow Vermont's produce industry—in the face of regulations and evolving market expectations—by aiding produce farms of all sizes and stages of development to meet food safety requirements, access markets, and promote public health as sustainable agricultural businesses.

This program will serve Vermont farms that grow and sell produce and engage critical external partners across a **produce safety program continuum** to ensure the industry feels educated and supported and has the tools to achieve compliance.

# Produce Safety Continuum for Farms



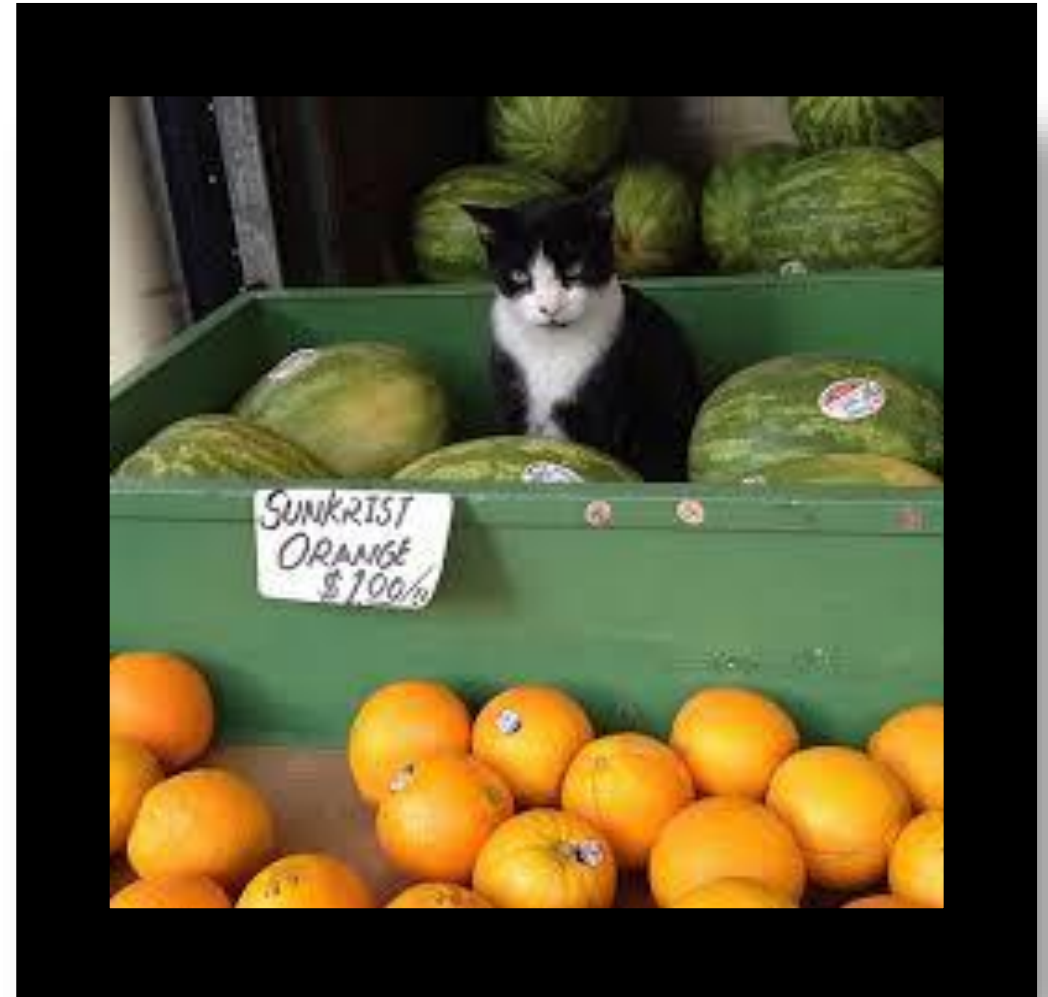
# Produce Safety Rule - 112.27

What requirements apply regarding domesticated animals in and around a **fully-enclosed building**?

(a) You must take reasonable precautions to prevent contamination of covered produce, food contact surfaces, and food-packing materials in fully-enclosed buildings with known or reasonably foreseeable hazards from domesticated animals by:

(1) Excluding domesticated animals from fully-enclosed buildings where covered produce, food contact surfaces, or food-packing material is **exposed**; or

(2) **Separating** domesticated animals in a fully enclosed building from an area where a covered activity is conducted on covered produce by **location, time, or partition**.

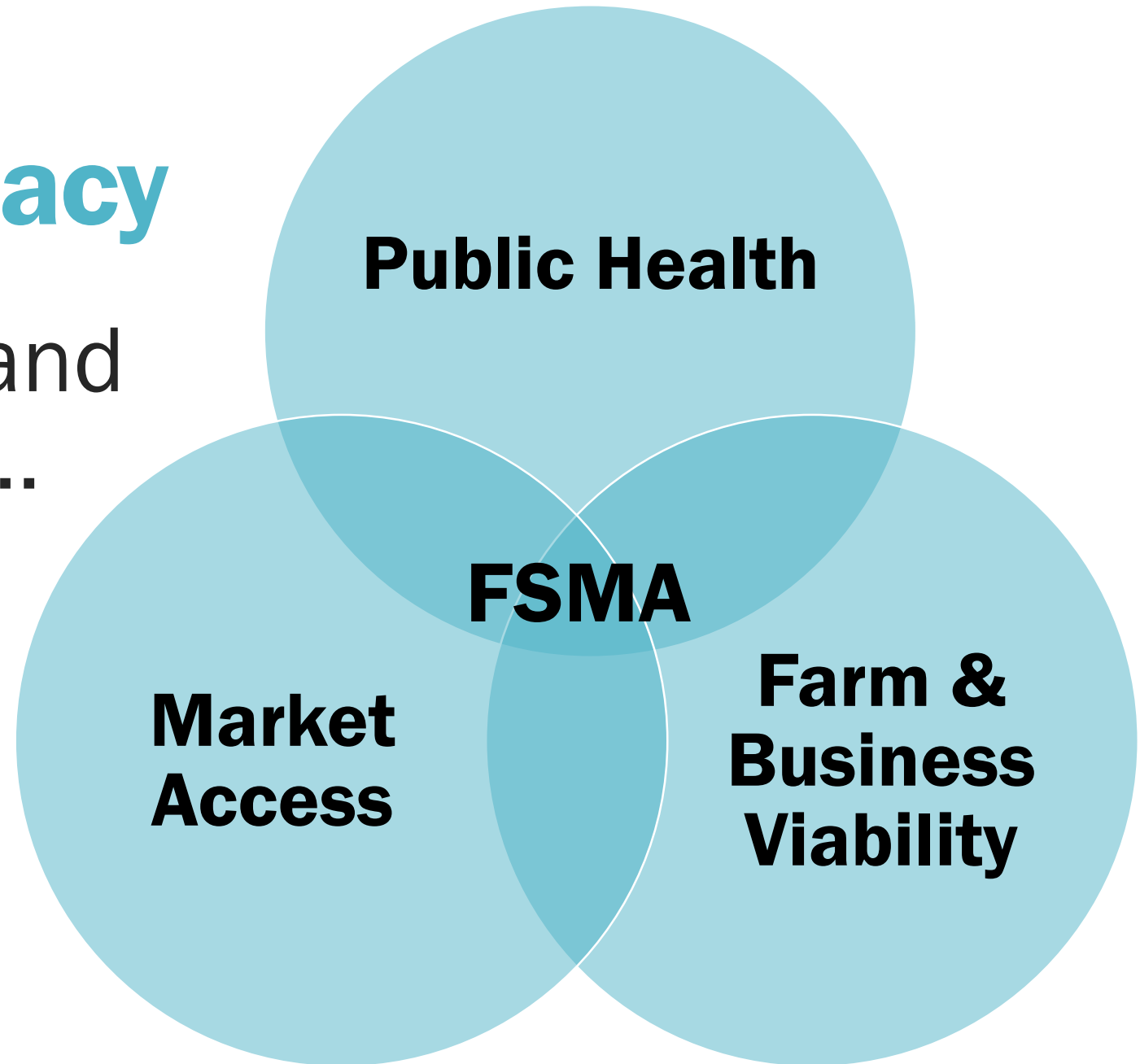




# Regulatory Literacy

Education before—and  
during—regulation ...

IN ACTION!



# Regulatory Literacy and Dairy Processing Plants

## PLANT START UP

Prior to construction:

- 1) Owner of potential plant contacts Dairy Section Plant Supervisor (Greg).
- 2) Meet to review the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO).
- 3) Plans submitted – reviewed with Greg

During and post construction:

- 1) Greg makes multiple visits as construction is proceeding.
- 2) Assists new business on pasteurization procedures and records, basic sanitation processes and records, etc.

## PLANT EXPERIENCING ISSUES

Sampling (high bacterial counts)

Quality/shelf-life issue (concern from businesses/customers, samples)

Goal is to help producer BEFORE product gets excluded from the marketplace

# PMO and Floor Drains

Review of processing plant plans through the lens of the PMO

Example - floor drains:

- Requirement to have
- Positioning
- Cleanable
- Floor pitch



# Regulatory Literacy and Deer Operations

## Vermont Captive Cervid Regulation

Identification (two forms of ear tags), fencing, record-keeping, disease testing, restraint equipment, herd inventories.

*All captive cervid operations shall have proper fencing and restraining facilities.*

*A physical herd inventory shall be conducted...all cervids shall be present or accounted for on the annual inventory.*



# Regulatory Literacy

Form of Technical Assistance  
provided by a regulatory agency

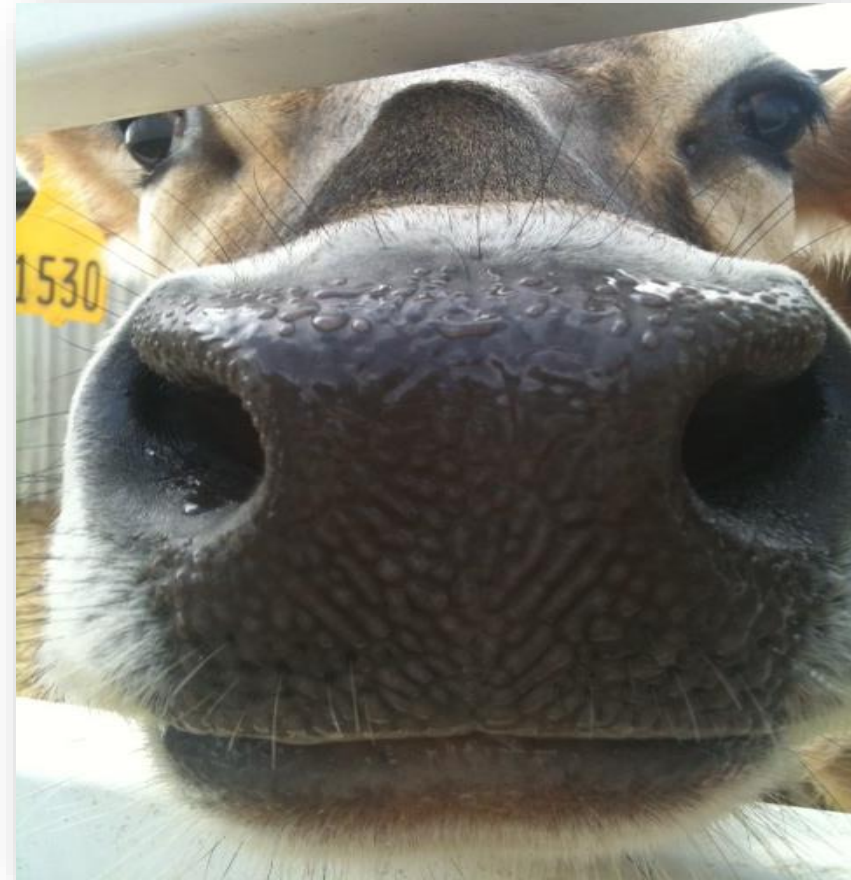
Provides clear expectations

Explains what the end result is and  
how to get there

Ensures everyone is on the same  
page

Avoids an 'I gotcha' situation

Responsibility of a good regulatory  
agency



# Contact us

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