



Delaware Farmers Learn to Manage Food Safety Risks

When Tom Smith, a fourth generation Delaware farmer, discovered that Wal-Mart was requiring an audit of his farm in order to continue selling to them, he turned to the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, and specifically Gordon Johnson, for help. "What we're dealing with now are primarily food safety issues," said Smith.

Smith explained that Wal-Mart is requiring audits to ensure that his and other farmer's produce is safe, and allow for traceability should a problem with the produce arise. Though Wal-Mart is requiring it now, Smith anticipates that most of the markets that sell produce to the public will require them in the future. "I assume, sooner or later, this is probably going to be mandatory for all people who sell fresh produce to the public."

Fortunately, Maria Pippidis and Gordon Johnson were conducting an Extension program titled "Food Safety on the Farm - Helping Large and Small Producers Understand the Risks and Develop On-Farm Risk Management Strategies," which allowed Smith and his partners to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP). This project was funded by a grant from the Northeast Center for Risk Management Education.

The 2-part voluntary GAP/GHP certification training was attended by 311 growers in Delaware. In level one, they learned things such as the rationale behind food safety initiatives and what an audit would look like and how to implement GAP/GHP strategies. Level two built on the first level, but focused more on wholesale and larger operations. One hundred fifty-six participants completed the training and received a Delaware Department of Agriculture Voluntary GAP/GHP certificate.

In addition, 16 training sessions were held throughout the state, and Extension conducted on-farm training for 93 farm workers, 3 mock audits, and 4 on-farm food safety tours. Afterward, a six-month post program survey showed that 90% of respondents reported being better able to manage risks as they relate to farm food safety, and 95% better understand their role in preventing food borne illness.

**ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-SIX PARTICIPANTS
COMPLETED THE TRAINING AND
RECEIVED A DELAWARE DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE VOLUNTARY GAP/GHP
CERTIFICATE.**



EXTENSION RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

“Helping America’s farmers and ranchers manage risk.”

The Extension Risk Management Education program provides training to help producers learn new strategies to manage complex and growing agricultural risks. Extension Risk Management Education accomplishes this by encouraging and funding innovative programs across the country, and helping programs focus on accomplishing tangible results.

Projects are producer-focused, results-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted results that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those results.

Commitment to funding results, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration allow you to view the accomplishments of all funded projects online at: www.ExtensionRME.org

Section 524(a)(3) of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 authorized the Partnerships for Risk Management Education and provided \$5 million dollars annually to be administered by USDA-NIFA. Extension Risk Management Education is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Extension Risk Management Education Regional Centers

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(501) 671-2165

Northeast Center

University of Delaware
(302) 831-6540

Western Center

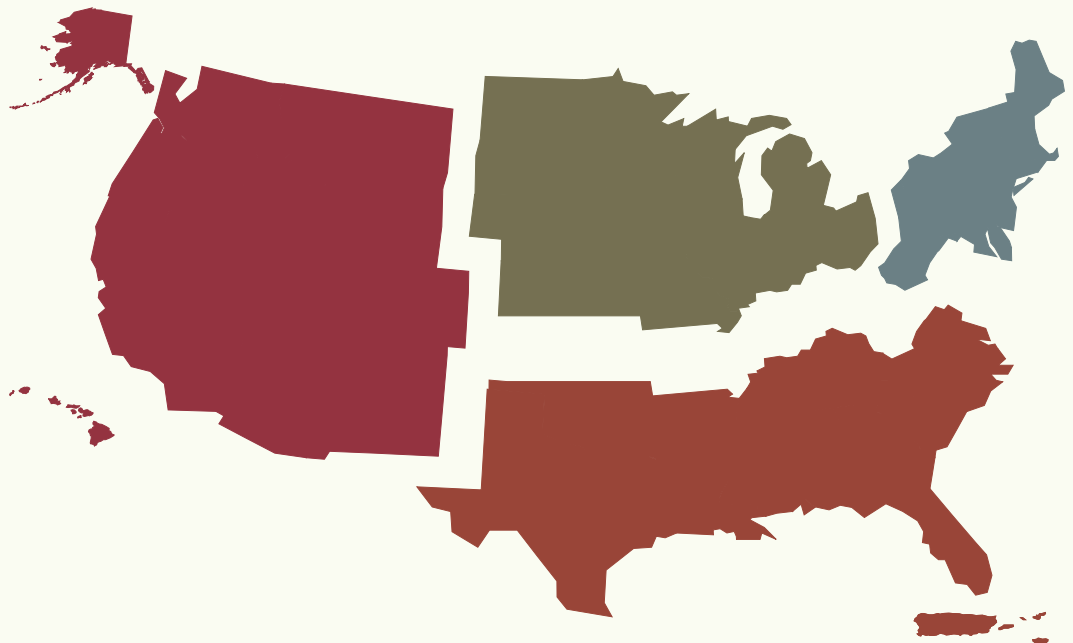
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