



NEW ENGLAND EXTENSION FOOD SAFETY CONSORTIUM

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

In the Field

Sanitation During Transportation

New England GAP Guidelines Addressed Here: *Sanitation During Transportation from the Field*

- Workers loading and transporting produce practice food personal hygiene.
- Harvested produce is loaded and stored in a manner to minimize physical damage and reduce risk of contamination during transport and to allow for air circulation.
- Vehicles used to transport fresh produce to market are well maintained and cleaned.
- Vehicles used to transport produce are not used to transport animals or animal products.

Good sanitation practices while transporting fresh produce will help to reduce the risk of contamination by harmful microorganisms. Microorganisms such as *salmonella* and *e-coli* *OH157* can cause foodborne illness. If you are not the one who transports your produce then it is a good idea to talk to your transporter about their sanitation practices. Fresh produce can be contaminated by other foods and by non- food sources during loading, unloading, storage and transport. Transporters should separate fresh produce from other foods and non-food products. Trucks should be clean, free of odors, dirt and debris. Proper temperatures should be maintained to ensure the freshness and quality of the produce. It is important to handle produce carefully to minimize physical damage.

Take a walk around your facility and check for signs of potential food safety hazards:

- A truck that is dirty and or smells of manure or other animal wastes
- A truck that is in disrepair
- A transporter who is not aware of the potential food safety risks associated with transporting fresh produce
- Careless handling of produce
- Workers/transporters with poor personal hygiene

What can you do?

- Ensure that transportation vehicles are clean and sanitary. If there are your own vehicles set up a regular cleaning and maintenance schedule.
- Do not ship fresh produce in trucks that have carried livestock or harmful substances such as chemicals or fertilizers. If this is your only option, be sure to thoroughly wash, rinse and sanitize them before using to transport.
- Use refrigerated trucks when possible
- Train your employees to practice good personal hygiene.

Additional References and Resources:

Guide to Minimize Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodguid.html>

US Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration

Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), October, 1998

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Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide: Good Agricultural Practices for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

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Kansas Food A Syst

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