



# Wholesale Readiness Program

The Wholesale Readiness Program is designed to assist producers of fresh fruit and vegetables in the Hudson Valley area in becoming more prepared to engage at a wholesale level with **GAPs (Good Agricultural Practices)** and the soon-to-be instituted federally mandated Produce Rule, which is part of the *Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)*. The main focus of the project is on educating and assisting farms in developing food safety plans in preparation for third party GAPs audits, which are being increasingly required by produce buyers.

Many growers currently remain unaware of the differences between FSMA and third party audits, and are unsure of how to proceed when asked to obtain GAPs certification from a buyer.

*Our educational GAPs training workshops answer all these questions, and provide all the detailed technical information farmers need in order to implement a GAPs plan and pass a third party audit.*

Farms of every size and fresh produce commodity attend the workshops with a variety of different needs and goals. The workshops are designed to be relevant to the whole diversity of producers. Currently we are working on developing a small number of more detailed trainings to target specific producers, e.g. – onion GAPs, PYO GAPs.

In addition, there is programming to educate growers about buyer needs in terms of packaging and harvest/post-harvest quality management. The intensive producer interaction with Cornell Cooperative Extension staff is meant to encourage utilization of other Extension resources to assist in scaling-up production aspects of the farm businesses as well.

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