



One-Day Training Required for Fresh Produce Growers

Release Date: 2/2/18

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MADISON – Mandatory food safety training for fresh produce growers will be available at three Wisconsin locations in February and March, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection announced.

The federal Food Safety Modernization Act requires this one-day training for growers with more than \$500,000 in annual produce sales in time for this year’s growing season. Growers with \$250,000-\$500,000 in annual sales must complete the training any time before the 2019 growing season, and those with sales under \$250,000 must complete it before the 2020 growing season. In each case, at least one supervisor or other responsible person from the farm must complete the training. Farms with produce sales under \$25,000 are exempt from the Produce Safety Rule, including the requirement for training.

The schedule and locations of upcoming trainings is:

Pardeeville – Tuesday, Feb. 20, W4610 Barden Road

Fond du Lac – Monday, Feb. 26, University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac, 400 University Drive

Cashton – Tuesday, March 13, S805 Irish Road

All classes will run 8 a.m.-5 p.m., with check-in 7:30-8 a.m. Cost for each is \$60. Registration forms for the Pardeeville and Cashton classes are available at the produce auction houses in those communities. Forms for the Fond du Lac class are available at the UW-Extension office in Fond du Lac. You can also email safeproduce@wi.gov for a registration form or call 608-224-4511 to have one emailed to you.

The course will cover use of manure as soil amendments; contact with domesticated and wild animals; worker training, health and hygiene; equipment, tools and buildings; water; and food safety plans.

“Food safety and good agricultural practices are important for farmers to survive today’s economy,” according to LaVern Zeiset, produce grower and board member of the Central Wisconsin Produce Auction. DATCP worked with Zeiset to conduct a training for members of his produce auction in January.

The Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011 is a sweeping reform of U.S. food safety regulation, based on preventing contamination from farm to table. The Produce Safety Rule, which mandates this training, is just one part of the law.

Wisconsin ranks 11th in the nation in number of produce farms, and second in number of organic produce farms. DATCP estimates that almost 1,100 Wisconsin farms will be covered by the rule.

These grower trainings are part of a series supported by DATCP. Training instructors are from DATCP and other partner organizations, including UW-Extension, UW-Madison, and industry and farmer organizations.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact WI-DATCP by phone at 608-224-4511 or email at safeproduce@wi.gov

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