

WEEKLY CROP UPDATE



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
COOPERATIVE
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Notes

Slides and Videos from Fruit & Vegetable Sessions - *Emmalea Ernest, Scientist - Vegetable Crops and Co-Ag Program Leader; emmalea@udel.edu*

The slide sets or videos from most of the vegetable and fruit session talks during Delaware Ag Week have been posted online at:

<https://sites.udel.edu/weeklilycropupdate/?p=21469>

Additional presentations may be added if speakers give permission to post their slides.

Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods Under the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule - *Wes Kline, Ag & Natural Resources County Agent, Cumberland Co., Rutgers University; wkline@njaes.rutgers.edu*

The FDA has finalized traceability requirements under FSMA. The rule takes effect January 20, 2023, but enforcement will be delayed until January 20, 2026. All operations will need to start complying on that date. Operations with sales of less than \$25,000 on average over the last 3 years adjusted for inflation based on 2020 are exempt. If a grower is exempt from the FSMA: PSR based on sales under \$25,000 it is also exempt from the traceability rule. Growers who sell directly to consumers, sell food to institution programs, produce certain foods that are packaged on a farm, grow food that is rarely consumed raw or grow food that receives certain

types of processing are exempt. If a grower sells wholesale and direct to consumer, the wholesale product may fall under the traceability rule.

FDA has developed a “Food Traceability List (FTL)” which is a list of foods for which additional traceability records are required to be maintained. In New Jersey it covers most of what is grown such as fresh cucumbers, herbs, leafy greens, melons, peppers, etc. unless it is considered rarely consumed raw.

- For growers who fall under the rule a traceability plan is required which includes:
- How the records are maintained including the format and location of the records
- Description of the procedures used to identify foods on the FTL list
- Description how traceability lot codes are assigned
- Contact person who manages the records
- Farm map showing the areas where commodities are grown and name of each field including coordinates
- Plans must be retained for 2 years.

Records must be maintained for every “Critical Tracking Event (CTE)” which is an event in the supply chain of a food involving the harvesting, cooling or initial packing of a raw agricultural commodity. Along with the CTE are “Key Data Elements (KDE)” which is the information which must be maintained. So what records are required?

- The commodity at harvest
- Quantity and unit of measure of the food harvested (boxes, pounds, etc.)
- Name of the field or growing area including GPS map coordinates

- The date of harvest
- Farm name, address and phone number of the operation

Lot codes will need to be assigned when the commodity is packed. The same lot code will be used throughout the marketing system. These lot code numbers do not need to be attached to each box or container. They do need to be on a bill of lading, invoice, etc.

The next three years will be a learning experience for growers, extension educators and regulators. There are many details in the rule which are not clear even after reading it more than once. At the New Jersey Agricultural Convention & Trade Show Wednesday February 8 in the Food Safety session (2:45-4:45) we will review the latest interpretation of the rule and discuss which records will be required. For anyone who wants more details go to:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-modernization-act-fsma/fsma-final-rule-requirements-additional-traceability-records-certain-foods>.

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Harvest and Post-Harvest Agricultural Water Requirements Start in 2023 Under the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule - *Wes Kline, Ag & Natural Resources County Agent, Cumberland Co., Rutgers University; wkline@njaes.rutgers.edu*

The water rule under the Food Safety Modernization Rule (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule (PSR) has been under review for some time. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has finalized the harvest and post-harvest water portion which includes water used during harvest, for hand washing, cleaning equipment, cooling, and cleaning produce.

As with other FSMA rules, the FDA plans to take an “educate before and while we regulate” posture as they begin implementing the harvest and post-harvest requirements. The harvest and post-harvest rule go into effect on the following dates:

- January 26, 2023, for all farms with sales over \$500,000.
- January 26, 2024, for small businesses (total sales more than \$250,00 but less than \$500,000); and
- January 26, 2025, for very small businesses (total sales more than \$25,000 but less than \$250,000).

Growers are required to test ground water sources (wells) four times in the first year and once each year thereafter. If the water does not meet acceptable levels (non-detectable generic E. coli) the farm would need to stop using the source and determine the cause, make corrections then return to testing four times. If a municipal water source is used the report from the municipality testing program is sufficient. Remember untreated surface water can not be used for harvest or post-harvest activities.

Growers will also need to do a water distribution inspection each year that evaluates the water source, connections going into harvest or post-harvest systems and any water delivery systems in a packing house. Records will need to be maintained for two years showing the inspection results. There will be more details presented at the New Jersey Agricultural Convention & Trade Show at Harrah’s Resort in Atlantic City February 8, 2023, during the afternoon food safety session.

Pre-Harvest (Irrigation) Agricultural Water Requirements

It is not yet known when the pre-harvest rule will be finalized. However, when the proposed rule is finalized, it will require farms to conduct an annual systems based agricultural water assessment to determine and guide measures to minimize potential risks associated with pre-harvest agricultural water. When the rule is finalized, FDA proposes the following compliance dates:

- Nine months after the effective date for all other businesses (farms over \$500,000);
- One year, nine months after the effective date for small businesses (farms more than \$250,00 to \$500,000); and

- Two years, nine months after the effective date for very small businesses (farms more than \$25,000 to \$250,000).

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Insect Pest Management Resources Available - David Owens, Extension Entomologist, owensd@udel.edu

During Ag Week, several resources were mentioned that may be of interest.

MyIPM App For Row Crops: pest photos, overviews, cultural, biological and chemical controls with insecticide trade names, rates, and other key information is at your finger tips with the MyIPM App. You can select and download insect pests for Peanut, Corn, Sorghum, Soybean, and Cotton as well as diseases for Peanut. The app is available for iPhone and Android users.

Pest Patrol mobile alerts: <https://www.syngenta-us.com/pest-patrol>. This service allows users to receive alerts when voice-recordings from university extension personnel are posted. You can select crops of interest and states or regions of interest. I periodically recorded short clips last year. Please note, if I post something to Pest Patrol, it WILL appear in the Weekly Crop Update.

“What’s On Your Seed” - Seed treatments have been used for a number of years, mostly for protection against seedling diseases. However, there are a number of seed treatments marketed for protection against a range of pests, including insects, nematodes and seedling pathogens, while others promote plant health. The purpose of this publication is to take some of the confusion of seed treatments away, giving you a better understanding of what is on your seed. The list covers seed treatments registered in the state of Wisconsin for use on field corn, soybean, small grain and/or alfalfa seed. https://ipcm.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2022/11/Whats_on_your_seed_web.pdf

Handy Bt Trait Table for Field Corn: <https://agrillife.org/lubbock/files/2022/02/BtTraitTable-March2022.pdf>

Handy Bt Trait Table for Sweet Corn: Pay attention to the ‘resistant’ column; only the Attribute II and Attribute Plus lines are ‘worm proof’. Please note, Bt sweet corn will not control stink bugs or sap beetles. There is one Attribute II variety not listed, Quick Trip - bicolor synergistic Triple Sweet. Also note that Milky Way is an Attribute Plus variety. https://agrillife.org/lubbock/files/2020/02/2020_BtTrait_Table_Sweet.pdf.

Insect Pest Management Trial Results and Summaries are posted on our Extension website through 2021 (posted earlier this month). Sorghum variety trials were mentioned and summaries can be found in the 2021 and 2020 books. <https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/sustainable-production/pest-management/insect-management-reports/>

Extension Insect Pest Management Videos on the UD YouTube extension page (<https://www.youtube.com/@UDEExtension/videos>) created in 2022: “Diagnosing and Identifying Pest Issues in Corn”, “Seed Corn Maggot Control”, “Chemigation in Watermelon”, “Plum Curculio”: Many thanks to Michelle Walfred, Morgan Malone, and Samantha Cotten for recording and editing assistance.

Surveys for Watermelon Producers and Poultry Producers - David Owens, Extension Entomologist, owensd@udel.edu

We are conducting surveys of watermelon and poultry producers to better understand how insect pests affect your operations and help us target research activities. You can access them by following the links:

[Darkling Beetle Survey](#)

[Watermelon Survey](#)

NRCS in Delaware Announces New Funding Opportunity for Conservation Activities

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Delaware is announcing the fiscal year 2023 signup period for [Conservation Incentive Contracts \(CIC\)](#), a new option available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Delaware producers should apply by February 10 to be considered for funding in fiscal year 2023.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program-Conservation Incentives Contracts (EQIP-CIC) is a voluntary conservation program that provides farmers increased financial and technical assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices and activities on working agricultural lands. Through EQIP-CIC, producers may be eligible for a separate payment limitation of \$200,000 above the standard EQIP payment limitation.

Conservation Incentive Contracts will help producers address priority resource concerns in cropland, such as field pesticide loss; field sediment, nutrient, and pathogen loss; and source water depletion. EQIP-CIC priority practices in Delaware include the following:

- Soil Health Testing (216)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till (329)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (345)
- Irrigation Water Management (449)
- Drainage Water Management (554)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pest Management Conservation System (595)
- Soil Carbon Amendment (808)

While applications for EQIP-CIC are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by February 10 to be considered for the 2023 funding period. Applications accepted after February 10 will be considered in the next signup. All applications are competitive and are ranked based on national, state and locally

identified resource priorities and the overall benefit to the environment.

Producers interested in EQIP-CIC should call their local USDA service center. In Delaware's Sussex County, call 302-856-3990, ext. 3; in Kent County, call 302-741-2600, ext. 3; and in New Castle County, call 302-832-3100, ext. 3. Or visit <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/eqip-conservation-incentive-contracts> for more information.

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NRCS Reminds Landowners to Apply for Assistance to Protect Working Lands and Wetlands

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is reminding Delaware landowners of the open application period for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). Through ACEP, NRCS offers technical and financial assistance for the purchase of conservation easements on eligible agricultural lands and wetlands. Although landowners and eligible entities may apply at any time, in order to be considered for FY 2023 funding, applications must be received by the following dates:

Friday, February 17, 2023 - Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)

Friday, March 3, 2023 - Agricultural Land Easements (ALE)

WRE and ALE are the two easement components under ACEP, each with a different application process. Please contact your local NRCS office to ensure you receive guidance on the correct application process.

- [ACEP-Agricultural Land Easements \(ALE\)](#) help preserve productive cropland, grassland, pastureland, and nonindustrial private forestland from conversion to non-agricultural uses. Eligible partners include state and local governments and non-governmental organizations that have farmland or grassland protection programs. Under the ALE, NRCS may contribute up to 50

percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement.

- [ACEP-Wetland Reserve Easements \(WRE\)](#) restore and enhance wetlands and improve wildlife habitat. Wetland conservation easements are either permanent or for 30 years. Landowners of eligible farmed or converted wetlands that can be successfully and cost-effectively restored are eligible to apply.

“Easements give agricultural producers the opportunity to keep working lands working, protect open spaces, and provide a beneficial impact to Delaware’s natural resources and wildlife,” said Kasey L. Taylor, NRCS State Conservationist in Delaware.

Applicants must own the land for two years and have farm records established with USDA’s Farm Service Agency. Properties eligible for WRE include farmed wetlands that can be successfully and economically restored; former or degraded wetlands with a history of agricultural use; wetlands farmed under natural conditions; and “prior-converted” cropland converted on or before December 23, 1985.

For more information on ACEP, contact your local USDA Service Center. In Sussex County, call 302-856-3990, ext. 3; in Kent County, call 302-741-2600, ext. 3; and in New Castle County, call 302-832-3100, ext. 3. Additional information on all NRCS programs and services is available online at www.de.nrcs.usda.gov.

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Announcements

Job Posting Extension Agent II, Agriculture New Castle County, Delaware

View the job posting online at:

<https://careers.udel.edu/en-us/job/499677/extension-agent-ii-agriculture>

Delaware Produce Safety Training

Wednesday, January 25, 2023 8:00-4:30
UD Carvel Research & Education Center
16483 County Seat Hwy, Georgetown, DE

What to Expect at the PSA Grower Training Course

The PSA Grower Training curriculum includes seven modules. For in-person courses, trainers will spend approximately seven hours of instruction time covering the curriculum content below.

- Introduction to Produce Safety
- Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training
- Soil Amendments
- Wildlife, Domesticated Animals, and Land Use
- Agricultural Water (Part I: Production Water; Part II: Postharvest Water)
- Postharvest Handling and Sanitation

In addition to learning about produce safety best practices, parts of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements are outlined within each module. There will be time for questions and discussion, so participants should come prepared to share their experiences and produce safety questions.

Register for the training via Eventbrite:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/january-25-2023-produce-safety-alliance-psa-grower-training-tickets-453291786937>

Call 302-856-7303 if you have questions about this training.

2023 Annie's Project Course

Wednesdays, Feb 22 to Mar 29, 2023
6:00-9:00 p.m.

University of Maryland Extension-Queen Anne's County, 505 Railroad Avenue, Suite 4, Centreville, MD 21617

or Online via Zoom

Annie's Project course focuses on the many aspects of farm management and are designed to empower

women in overall farm decision-making and to build local networks throughout the state. The target audience is farm-women and women involved in agriculture with a passion for business, agriculture, and involvement in farm operations. Topics for the sessions cover the five areas of Risk Management - Production, Marketing, Financial, Legal Risk, Human Resources. Annie's Project course is open to anyone interested in farm management practices and is approved for USDA FSA borrower training.

This course is a discussion-based workshop bringing women together to learn from experts in production, financial management, human resources, marketing, and the legal field.

There is plenty of time for questions, sharing, reacting, and connecting with your presenters and fellow participants. It's a relaxed, fun, and dynamic way to learn, grow and meet other women in agriculture.

Cost: \$50 Annie's Project Course; \$150 Annie's Project Course and FSA Borrower Training Fee

Registration and additional info at:
<https://extension.umd.edu/programs/agriculture-food-systems/program-areas/farm-and-agribusiness-management/annies-project/class-information>

For more information call Shannon Dill at 410-822-1244 (sdill@umd.edu) or Jenny Rhodes at 410-758-0166 (jrhodes@umd.edu).

Carbon Credit Symposium

March 1, 2023 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Delaware State Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall Harrington, Delaware

Speakers from USDA, University of Maryland and Iowa State will cover current updates regarding:

- Understanding and measuring carbon credits
- Legal consideration of contracts
- Basic agronomics of carbon sequestration

Registration Deadline February 17, 2023

Register online at: www.udel.edu/0010208

Organized by Delaware Department of Agriculture and University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

Farm Labor Webinars

The 2023 workshop series from the Farm Labor Dashboard project will help farmers build knowledge and skills they need to successfully recruit and manage the right employees for their farms. The workshops are geared to produce and diversified livestock producers who are new to managing employees, and to farmers who are considering changes to how they arrange for, and manage, labor on their farms. Women farmers' learning needs and priorities are integrated throughout the series.

All sessions will be held via Zoom. Connection information will be sent following registration. Learn more at the [Farm Labor Dashboard](#) or email beth.holtzman@uvm.edu.

Staffing Up

February 9, 2023 Noon-1:30 pm ET

Join this participatory session to share and co-learn effective strategies to hire and retain employees. Prior to the workshop you will receive advance materials – such as short video clips and/or short articles – that will set the stage for discussion and learning during the session. Following the session, there will be opportunities to for individual follow-up and feedback from session facilitators. [Free, advance registration required.](#)

Practical Techniques to Optimize Employee Performance

February 23, 2023 Noon-1:30 pm ET

In this participatory session, we'll explore effective communication practices that share expectations and provide feedback to employees all season long. Prior to the workshop you will receive advance materials – such as short video clips and/or short articles – that will set the stage for discussion and learning during the session. Following the session, there will be opportunities to for individual follow-up and feedback from session facilitators. [Free, advance registration required.](#)

The Art of Negotiation

March 2 & 9, 2023 Noon-1 pm ET

Negotiation basics, with a focus on labor management. [Free, advance registration required.](#)

Delaware Training for Field Scouts

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 evening
Kent County Cooperative Extension Office
69 Transportation Circle, Dover DE 19901

University of Delaware Extension Specialists will offer training for new and experienced field scouts for the 2023 field season.

This will be an evening session for anyone interested in properly identifying pests that may affect crops in and around planting season.

Look for more information and registration information in the February Weekly Crop Update.

Weekly Crop Update is compiled and edited by Emmalea Ernest, Scientist - Vegetable Crops

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