

## Growers or Other Farm-type Operations

# FSMA is Coming! What You Need to Know for Produce Safety Compliance

### Why is FSMA important to me?

Almond growers and other primary or secondary activities farms such as some huller/shellers and brownskin almond facilities are covered by the Produce Safety rule which goes into effect in **January 2018** for larger operations.

### How do I know whether Produce Safety applies to me?

The FDA has established broad definitions of agricultural and food processing operations. Whether you are considered a "Primary Production Farm," "Secondary Activities Farm," "Farm Mixed-type Facility" or a "Facility" determines which FSMA rules apply to you. Almond growers and/or farms are classified as follows:

#### Primary Production Farm ("traditional" farms)

An operation that grows almonds and/or harvests, hulls, shells and/or handles (sizes, sorts, grades, cleans and packs) almonds on the same farm.\*

An operation that hulls, shells and/or handles almonds located in the same general location as the farm.

\*Almonds that are hulled, shelled and/or handled by this operation can be grown on the same farm or elsewhere.

#### Secondary Activities Farm (connection to a farm)

An operation that hulls, shells and/or handles almonds that were grown on a farm(s) under the same ownership, and the majority of product run at the facility is from the common ownership farm(s).

An almond operation that is not a farm, nor connected to a farm, will be classified as a Facility (please see appropriate handout).

### What do I need to do right now to comply with Produce Safety?

You are in a strong position to comply with the FSMA Produce Safety rule thanks to the leadership and vision of growers, hullers and processors to implement good agricultural practices, good manufacturing practices and an industrywide pasteurization program.

#### Two options exist for complying with the Produce Safety rule:

**Option 1:** Utilize the Produce Safety rule exemption by taking two steps:

- **Step 1:** Provide a written disclosure to your huller/sheller and handler that states "almonds are not processed to adequately reduce the presence of microorganisms of public health significance." Almond Board of California (ABC) is in the process of developing a written disclosure form, which will be available online soon. Written disclosures could be provided on grower tags, contracts or other paperwork.
- **Step 2:** (which will be required two years after the primary compliance date – earliest date of January 2020): Annually obtain a written assurance from your handler indicating that the almonds will be treated in accordance with the requirements of the mandatory pasteurization program or appropriately further processed for export markets. Please note: ABC is currently working with the FDA to identify appropriate written assurances that will meet FDA expectations for the grower exemption.

**Option 2:** Full Produce Safety Rule Compliance – Meet Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) requirements related to:

- Agricultural water (extensive testing and documentation for microbial water quality)
- Biological soil amendments
- Worker hygiene
- Employee training
- Buildings, tools and equipment
- Domesticated and wild animals

Note: FDA will have authority to inspect your farm by law unless you utilize the exemption status.

Visit [almonds.com/growers/fsma](http://almonds.com/growers/fsma) for more information.

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## Compliance Deadlines:

<b>For larger orchards the primary compliance date is:</b> <b>Jan. 26, 2018</b> >\$500,000 in crop value	<b>For midsize orchards the primary compliance date is:</b> <b>Jan. 28, 2019</b> \$250,000–\$500,000 in crop value	<b>For smaller orchards the primary compliance date is:</b> <b>Jan. 27, 2020</b> \$25,000–\$250,000 in crop value
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You'll have an additional two years to comply with the written customer assurance requirement. Growers choosing Option 2 will have an additional two years to comply with certain water- and irrigation-related requirements. If the average annual value of your crop during the previous three years is \$25,000 or less, FSMA regulations do not apply.

## Additional Resources:

- FDA Resources on Produce Safety Rule: <https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm334114.htm>
- Produce Safety Alliance: <https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/>
- UC Davis – FSMA Produce Safety Rule website (includes agricultural water calculator tool): [http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/Pre-\\_-\\_Post-harvest\\_Produce/FSMA/](http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/Pre-_-_Post-harvest_Produce/FSMA/)
- University of Arizona – Fresh Produce Safety Website: <https://cals.arizona.edu/fps/node/57/>
- Preventive Controls Alliance: <https://www.ifsh.iit.edu/fspca>

**Visit [almonds.com/growers/fsma](https://almonds.com/growers/fsma) for more information.**

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