



PATCHWORK ALLIANCE COOPERATIVE

The Patchwork Alliance is a member-owned and cooperatively organized multi-member LLC. Cooperative ownership means greater transparency for customers and increased connection to our community. Our local farmers, creators, and service providers represent their own needs and offerings, individually and collectively, with the support of the whole community of fellow owners and members.

We abide by these Cooperative Principles:

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training, and information
- Cooperation among cooperatives
- Concern for the community

We do not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or creed, gender, gender expression, age, national origin or ancestry, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of Patchwork Alliance' activities or operations.

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DISCLAIMER: This document is a living document. Please keep in mind that through your feedback as a producer in Patchwork Alliance, all policy and protocol, fees, etc. are eligible for reworking through the governance process.

PATCHWORK ALLIANCE: **MISSION, VISION, INNOVATION**

Mission: A Shared Goal

The purpose of this cooperative is to provide independent WNC regional growers, crafters, makers, and service providers with ownership in a shared marketplace, and to connect them with WNC consumers who want local, fresh, and natural foods and products, and who value community-owned agriculture, local economy, and cultural diversity.

Vision: A Shared Plan

Patchwork Alliance is a community-owned local food, product, and service hub operating throughout WNC. Our community understands the urgency and necessity of organized, active, and thriving local food systems which are accessible and ethical for people and the environment. We create significant positive impact for our region's communities by helping individual households transition from the current extractive, industrialized economic systems into local foodsheds and production systems. We extend our values of cooperative organization, regenerative agriculture, and local economic investment throughout our region and create networks of abundant communities.

Innovation: A Shared Strategy

Many gifts of the information age can be refined and repurposed into systems that serve progressive alternative economic and currency models. Patchwork Alliance utilizes Local Food Marketplace software, which contains impressive functionality and personalization and allows for creative thinking about local economic exchange. Through this software platform, we can create a multi-stakeholder ownership structure with inter-producer, inter-worker, and inter-service-provider trading and commerce.

PRODUCER-OWNER ELIGIBILITY

Farmers, producers, service providers, artists, craftspeople, land-based businesses, restaurants, farmers markets, other farming cooperatives, home-based enterprises, donation and nonprofit organizations/services--any WNC-based business that is in direct management of its product supply or service is eligible for producer-ownership in the Alliance.

Patchwork Alliance is set up as a completely open market, for those who meet the producer eligibility criteria. Beyond those criteria, there is currently no bar to participating in the market except for violation of Cooperative Principles (outlined above) and federal and state laws and regulations. In not limiting the number or types of producers, we will be able to create “unionizing” structures by facilitating and supporting the formation of producer groups within the Patchwork Alliance.

Please be aware that the Patchwork Alliance does not limit how many and what type of products and practices are eligible for the online market.

STEPS TO BECOMING A PRODUCER-OWNER

Step #1 Get Set Up for VENDING

- Read the [Producers FAQ](#) for policy and protocol info for vending in the market.
- Fill out [Producer Application](#).
- We will be in touch to get you set up so you can start selling.

Step #2 Become an OWNER

Patchwork is a multi-stakeholder cooperative. Our producers, consumers, and workers are owners together in this business.

NOTE: as of Dec, 2020, we are conducting a feedback process with current and potential producers to come up with the final ownership share value, which is tentatively set at \$200 for a full equity share. Our financial plans are still being finalized, and this may change.

Here are producers' steps to ownership:

- Owners are set up with a capital account, into which payments go toward an ownership share.
- Payment Plans
 - a. \$5/mo (40 month payment plan) ("Access" payment plan)
 - b. \$67/yr (three year payment plan)
 - c. \$200 (full payment)
 - i. We can set up a custom payment plan with a minimum of \$5/month, please inquire.
 - ii. If a producer has limitations to participation in this scheme, please inquire.
- We will find out how you would like to contribute to your capital account when you are onboarded. If you have questions about ownership before filling out the application, please see the [Ownership FAQ](#) online or get in touch with producers@patchworkalliance.com
- Once a producer has purchased a full ownership share, there is no obligation to continue paying into one's capital account in order to continue selling in the market.

PRODUCT PRICING GUIDELINES

See “The Sales Process,” below, for instructions on how to list your products for sale in the marketplace, and update your product availability weekly.

Producer Commission

NOTE: as of December 2020, we are conducting a feedback process with current and potential producers to come up with the final commission rate for 2021. Check the [Producers FAQ](#) on the website for the most up to date commission information.

Here's how we're planning to have pricing and commissions work in 2021 :

- You set the retail price you want the customer to see.
- When we pay you out, we keep the commission and pay out the rest. The financial planning has indicated we should set commissions somewhere from 22% to 27%.

By having producers set the final customer price and then paying a commission out of that price, we hope to improve producer consciousness of how price perception affects the overall market. We are aiming for the commission to cover these costs:

- marketing costs, including costs associated with discounts, promotions
- consumer relations/administration
- online market software subscription
- producer relations/administration

Product pricing is really important in this early stage of our market as we are attracting consumers to it. Consider keeping your prices low (as a marketing expense) that will be heavier during the initial stages and lighten up as our customer base grows.

Our goal is to create a convenient, accessible, and lucrative marketplace for producers in the greater Asheville area.

Potential for Wholesale Marketing

We aspire to have wholesale and restaurant buyers in the market. If you have the production capability to fill wholesale orders yourself, feel free to post them to the market using the same guidelines as above to ensure they see a competitive price.

We are also planning to reach out to wholesale buyers in a systematic and extensive way in the months ahead, perhaps in conjunction with recruitment for a physical sales event designed to attract wholesale as well as retail buyers. If this is something that interests you, please let us know in a note to producers@patchworkalliance.com.

Please do not undercut your fellow producer-owners. If you need to move products quickly at a reduced rate, please contact producers@patchworkalliance.com for assistance with creating a promotion or wholesale transaction.

Posting Free Products for “Sale”

We are encouraging producers to offer products for donation on the market. You can post bulk products that can be “bought” for free by food donation/distribution organizations, or you can post retail products that individuals can “purchase” for free. Please contact access@patchworkalliance.com for details.

PRODUCER PAYMENTS

Sales are a direct sale from producer to customer. Patchwork only handles the payment processing, marketing, and distribution and pays producers out for product sales. Product sales consist of the total units sold, at unit price.

Schedule

Payment Cycle - Every two weeks (on a Friday) you will be paid for the previous two weeks.

Payout Options

We will set up your payment preferences when we set up your account.

- Payout Option 1: Get paid out by check or Paypal automatically at the end of each payout cycle (every other Friday).
- Payout Option 2: You can allocate your payout to a combination of using your sales to shop in the market, investing in your equity ownership (capital account), and/or getting paid out by check or Paypal.

THE SALES PROCESS

Online Page Management Information and Support

- This [Producer Guide](#) acts as a quick reference for all the major tasks you will need to do to manage your producer page.
- For more details, see [Local Food Marketplace Producer Guide](#).
- Contact producers@patchworkalliance.com for all assistance requests.

Posting Goods and/or Services to the Storefront

1. We'll set you up with a producer page and all the info you'll need to learn how to manage your inventory, reporting, and sales.
2. You'll use the [Producer Guide](#) to manage your inventory on a week to week basis. (We'll be there to support you when you need it.)

Schedule

1. The market is open weekly from 9am Thursday until 6pm Monday.
2. Producers are responsible for updating and confirming their products' availability between Monday evening and Wednesday evening, while the market is closed.
3. On Wednesday nights, market coordinators will check for new products entered by producers to make sure they get categorized correctly and put up for sale.
4. Sales will accumulate on your account throughout the weekend until the market closes on Monday at 6PM.
5. After the market closes, a "pick list" will be emailed to each producer, itemizing and totalling all of the week's sales.

Labeling and Packaging Your Products

Disclaimer: These standards are subject to change as we evolve and learn how to fine tune our systems. We welcome your feedback as we do that.

We are aware that labeling can be a big hurdle for producers to overcome, and we are developing a system where we can have labels ready for you to use when you come to drop off product, and a system for transferring product into our crates. Please let us know how you feel about a system such as this instead of labeling on your own.

Producers must clearly label **ALL** of their products to simplify aggregation. The packing crew will be grouping your product with other items purchased by each individual customer. If a producer knows their labeling is not up to par for a week, it is their responsibility to contact operations@patchworkalliance.com to guide them through any potential confusion arising from labeling issues.

Here are our current labeling standards:

- **Items already labeled** (pre-packaged goods such as pickles). No need to label any further as long as label matches item name *as it appears in the online market*. Pack in a consolidated box with producer name labelled on outside.
- **Items not typically labelled, but bagged** (greens, micros, onions, potatoes, etc). Clear labels on each bag that include producer's name, product name *as it appears in the online market*, and unit size.
 - Break out sold units into separate bags/clamshells, etc. For example, if you sell 10 units of .25 lb of arugula, you'll bag that into individual units and label each with "Arugula, baby; .25 lb) before delivering. If you have many bags of arugula of the same size, you can also leave the bags unlabelled, and pack them alone in a container and label the box with "Arugula, baby; .25lb, 10 units"
 - Open spillable containers are not allowed (such as pulp berry containers)
- **Items typically sold by weight, but not typically pre-bagged** (cucumbers, eggplant, peppers). Instead of selling these by weight, we encourage you when possible to sell these items "by the each" (like 2 cucumbers, 3 cucumbers) to avoid excessive bagging. *If you need to sell by the weight, you will need to bag and label each item.*
- **Items typically sold "by the each"** (cabbage, lettuce heads, cauliflower). Pack items by the each (meaning single items rather than bagged by the pound, for example) without other kinds of items in the box. Label the box with product name *as it appears in the online market*, and number of units.

Delivering Ordered Products - Aggregation

A market coordinator will set you up with an aggregation time and location where you can deliver your products. All products end up at the Bountiful Cities Pearson Garden facility in Montford, 408 Pearson Drive 28801, where they're packed for delivery to customers. Aggregation happens on Tuesday

and/or Wednesday (timing depends on the method you choose). Currently these are the ways to get product to us (see the [Producers FAQ](#) for updated options):

- **Deliver to 408 Pearson Drive 28801**, any time on Tuesday or Wednesday. This is currently a self-check drop-off site. There is a cooler there, and a checklist. Producers bring their items and follow the instructions on signs to get their inventory checked in. We will be adding a code-lock door handle to the cooler there to increase security. All product needs to arrive at Pearson Garden before 8pm Wednesday. Early Thursday morning is possible, but only by appointment by emailing operations@patchworkalliance.com.
- **Set up a “Sub-Aggregation Guild”** where you collaborate with producers in your area to share aggregation responsibilities. Guild members deliver to one location, and then someone delivers all the guild members’ product to Pearson Garden. Producers who are aggregating in this way will have one point of contact with the Patchwork distribution circle, and will manage the logistics and accuracy of their drop-offs amongst themselves. All product needs to arrive at Pearson Garden before 8pm Wednesday. Early Thursday morning is possible, but only by appointment by emailing operations@patchworkalliance.com. Currently Patchwork Urban Farms is hosting a sub-aggregation site at 47 Cloyes St. in West Asheville, 28806. To join this group, please contact Sunil at 412-418-2633.
- **Get added to our aggregation routes**. We are currently making drives up to the Mars Hill area, and down to the Mills River area, as well as stopping at several tailgate markets. If you are in any of these areas, or vend at a market in town on Tuesday or Wednesday, we can get you on our routes immediately. If you don’t fit into any of the current routes or markets and would like to be added to a new route in the future, please let us know.
- **Backstock Inventory**. We can hold shelf-stable product for you, and set your inventory online to match what we have. Currently this service is limited for lack of storage space; however, we foresee having ample space to do this in the future. You get paid as your product sells, and monitor your inventory online to initiate restocking. Please inquire with market coordinators at producers@patchworkalliance.com.
- **Pre-purchased Inventory**. We can consider pre-purchasing bulk storable products from you. Please inquire with market coordinators at producers@patchworkalliance.com.

What Happens if I Can't Fulfill My Pick List?

Producers must report any inventory shortages ASAP, preferably when the sale occurs or at least before the market closes for the week. Resolving these issues gets more complicated once the pick lists are issued, so please keep an eye on your sales and availability during the days the market is open.

Shortages create fruitless labor for the cooperative and disappoint customers, so they are to be diligently avoided by verifying and holding inventory until the market closes.

If repeated inventory discrepancies occur, or they occur because of a producer's careless inventory management, the market coordinators may, after a first warning, propose a fee for future discrepancies. Depending on the nature of the inventory discrepancy, producers may be charged 3%-10% of the value of that product.

BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNTING, AND TAXES

Our books are completely transparent, and the Financial Circle can provide access to information you need. You can download sales reports from your producer page online and run various reports to collect data on your sales patterns.

You are responsible for all sales and use taxes for the sale of your products.

The market coordinators (producers@patchworkalliance.com) will help you with requesting financial information from the cooperative and setting up your product listings to add tax to your items.

INSURANCE, LIABILITY, AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Risk Management, Insurance, and Hold Harmless Provisions

Patchwork Alliance risk management efforts include best practices, education, and enforcement to promote a safe and healthy environment. Producers must participate actively in these efforts and take all steps necessary to assure health and safety.

Producers, as a condition of participation in Patchwork Alliance, agree to the following hold harmless provisions:

- Each producer participating in the Patchwork Alliance shall be responsible for any loss, personal injury, deaths, and/or other damage that may occur as a result of the producer's negligence or that of its servants, agents, and employees, and hereby agrees to exonerate, hold harmless, indemnify, and defend Patchwork Online Market, DBA Patchwork Alliance, its successors and assigns, from and against any and all losses, damages, claims, suits or actions, judgments and costs, and attorneys fees which may arise or grow out of any injury or death of persons or damage to property in any manner connected with the producer's products, operations, or vending in the market.
- Patchwork Alliance does not have insurance covering producer participation in the online market. Maintaining liability insurance coverage is the responsibility of each individual producer.

License, Permit, Certification, and Inspection Requirements

Producers are required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and must retain valid and current documentation of required licenses, permits, or certifications. Examples of applicable documentation that may be required include:

- North Carolina Department of Agriculture (NCDA) kitchen inspection (for processed foods including baked goods, jams, vinegars, juices, coffee, etc.)
- NCDA Division of Meat and Poultry meat handler's license
- FDA Short Course Certification for acidified foods (e.g. pickles, relishes, etc.)

- USDA Organic Certification (for use of “certified organic” description in all cases and for use of “organic” description by farms with more than \$5000 in annual organic sales)
- Sales Tax ID Number

Patchwork Alliance does not warrant that the information we provide covers all producer legal responsibilities--each producer is responsible for determining that on their own.

PRODUCER SOPs

These SOPs are aimed at all types of producers. Please scroll down to find your product group(s). All producers agree upon becoming vendors of the Patchwork Online Market LLC, to follow these SOPs.

Covid-19 Management

Information is constantly developing around best practices related to Covid transmission in post-harvest handling and delivery. Please keep up to date with CDC and NC state guidelines and regulations, and do everything you can to prevent the transmission of pathogens. Please refer to the food handling SOPs below for general best practice information on food safety.

- [Considerations for Fruit and Vegetable Growers Related to Coronavirus & COVID-19](#), University of Vermont
- Planning and communication advice for markets and farmers markets. [Coronavirus: Fresh Produce Industry Resources](#), United Fresh Produce Association

Produce and Other Farm-Fresh Products

Proper post harvest handling and transport is key to maintain a line of quality from the field to the consumer. Guidance is here:

<https://attra.ncat.org/product/postharvest-handling-of-fruits-and-vegetables/>

All Patchwork produce growers should be aware and follow practices that follow the FSMA Rules copied here along with the Covid guidance above.

FSMA Final Rule on Produce Safety - Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption

1. Agricultural Water

The Produce Safety rule establishes, for the first time, science-based minimum standards for the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of fruits and

vegetables grown for human consumption. The rule is part of the agency's ongoing efforts to implement the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act. The final rule went into effect January 26, 2016.

Below are the agricultural water requirements as they are currently written in the Produce Safety rule. Sprouts, because of their unique vulnerability to contamination, remain subject to applicable agricultural water requirements in the final rule and their original compliance dates.

Additional Information:

- *FDA Intends to Extend Compliance Dates for Agricultural Water Standards.*
- *FDA Considering Simplifying Agricultural Water Standards*
- *External Link Disclaimer*
- *[ARCHIVED].*

Requirements:

- **Water quality:** *The final rule adopts the general approach to water quality proposed in the supplemental rule, with some changes. The final rule establishes two sets of criteria for microbial water quality, both of which are based on the presence of generic E. coli, which can indicate the presence of fecal contamination.*
 - *No detectable generic E. coli are allowed for certain uses of agricultural water in which it is reasonably likely that potentially dangerous microbes, if present, would be transferred to produce through direct or indirect contact. Examples include water used for washing hands during and after harvest, water used on food-contact surfaces, water used to directly contact produce (including to make ice) during or after harvest, and water used for sprout irrigation. The rule establishes that such water use must be immediately discontinued and corrective actions taken before re-use for any of these purposes if generic E. coli is detected. The rule prohibits use of untreated surface water for any of these purposes.*
 - *The second set of numerical criteria is for agricultural water that is directly applied to growing produce (other than sprouts). The criteria are based on two values, the geometric mean (GM) and the statistical threshold (STV). The GM of samples is 126 or less CFU of generic E. coli per 100 mL of water and the STV of samples is 410 CFU or less of generic E. coli in 100 mL of water.*
 - *The GM is an average, and therefore represents what is called the central tendency of the water quality (essentially, the average amount of generic E. coli in a water source).*
 - *STV reflects the amount of variability in the water quality (indicating E. coli levels when adverse conditions come into play—like rainfall or a high river stage that can wash waste into rivers and canals). Although this is an over simplification, it can*

be described as the level at which 90 percent of the samples are below the value.

- *The FDA is exploring the development of an online tool that farms can use to input their water sample data and calculate these values.*
 - *These criteria account for variability in the data and allow for occasional high readings of generic E.coli in appropriate context, making it much less likely (as compared to the originally proposed criteria for this water use) that a farm will have to discontinue use of its water source due to small fluctuations in water quality.*
 - *These criteria are intended as a water management tool for use in understanding the microbial quality of agricultural water over time and determining a long-term strategy for use of water sources during growing produce other than sprouts.*
 - *If the water does not meet these criteria, corrective actions are required as soon as is practicable, but no later than the following year. Farmers with agricultural water that does not initially meet the microbial criteria have additional flexibility by which they can meet the criteria and then be able to use the water on their crops. These options include, for example:*
 - *Allowing time for potentially dangerous microbes to die off on the field by using a certain time interval between last irrigation and harvest, but no more than four consecutive days.*
 - *Allowing time for potentially dangerous microbes to die off between harvest and end of storage, or to be removed during commercial activities such as washing, within appropriate limits.*
 - *Treating the water.*
- **Testing:** *The final rule adopts the general approach to testing untreated water used for certain purposes proposed in the supplemental notice, with some changes. The rule still bases testing frequency on the type of water source (i.e. surface or ground water).*
 - *In testing untreated surface water—considered the most vulnerable to external influences—that is directly applied to growing produce (other than sprouts), the FDA requires farms to do an initial survey, using a minimum of 20 samples, collected as close as is practicable to harvest over the course of two to four years. The initial survey findings are used to calculate the GM and STV (these two figures are referred to as the “microbial water quality profile”) and determine if the water meets the required microbial quality criteria.*
 - *After the initial survey has been conducted, an annual survey of a minimum of five samples per year is required to update the calculations of GM and STV.*
 - *The five new samples, plus the previous most recent 15 samples, create a rolling dataset of 20 samples for use in confirming that the water is still used appropriately by recalculating the GM and STV.*

- *For untreated ground water that is directly applied to growing produce (other than sprouts), the FDA requires farms to do an initial survey, using a minimum of four samples, collected as close as is practicable to harvest, during the growing season or over a period of one year. The initial survey findings are used to calculate the GM and STV and determine if the water meets the required microbial quality criteria.*
 - *After the initial survey has been conducted, an annual survey of a minimum of one sample per year is required to update the calculations of GM and STV.*
 - *The new sample, plus the previous most recent three samples, create a rolling dataset of four samples for use in confirming that the water is still used appropriately by recalculating the GM and STV.*
- *For untreated ground water that is used for the purposes for which no detectable generic E. coli is allowed, the FDA requires farms to initially test the untreated ground water at least four times during the growing season or over a period of one year. Farms must determine whether the water can be used for that purpose based on these results.*
 - *If the four initial sample results meet the no detectable generic E. coli criterion, testing can be done once annually thereafter, using a minimum of one sample. Farms must resume testing at least four times per growing season or year if any annual test fails to meet the microbial quality criterion.*
- *There is no requirement to test agricultural water that is received from public water systems or supplies that meet requirements established in the rule (provided that the farm has Public Water System results or certificates of compliance demonstrating that the water meets relevant requirements), or if the water is treated in compliance with the rule's treatment requirements.*
- *In September 2017, the FDA posted a list of methods it has determined to be scientifically valid and at least equivalent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's method 1603, which is referenced in the Produce Safety rule.*

2. Biological Soil Amendments

- **Raw Manure:** *The FDA is conducting a risk assessment and extensive research on the number of days needed between the applications of raw manure as a soil amendment and harvesting to minimize the risk of contamination. (A soil amendment is a material, including manure, that is intentionally added to the soil to improve its chemical or physical condition for growing plants or to improve its capacity to hold water.)*
 - *At this time, the FDA does not object to farmers complying with the USDA's National Organic Program standards, which call for a 120-day interval between the application of raw manure for crops in contact with the soil and 90 days for crops not in contact with the soil. The agency considers adherence to these standards a prudent step toward*

minimizing the likelihood of contamination while its risk assessment and research is ongoing.

- *The final rule requires that untreated biological soil amendments of animal origin, such as raw manure, must be applied in a manner that does not contact covered produce during application and minimizes the potential for contact with covered produce after application.*
- **Stabilized Compost:** *Microbial standards that set limits on detectable amounts of bacteria (including *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella* spp., fecal coliforms, and *E. coli* 0157:H7) have been established for processes used to treat biological soil amendments, including manure. The rule includes two examples of scientifically valid composting methods that meet those standards. Stabilized compost prepared using either of these methods must be applied in a manner that minimizes the potential for contact with produce during and after application.*
- *Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin (PDF: 132KB)*
- *Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin (Spanish) (PDF: 169KB)*

3. Sprouts

- *The final rule includes new requirements to help prevent the contamination of sprouts, which have been frequently associated with foodborne illness outbreaks. Sprouts are especially vulnerable to dangerous microbes because of the warm, moist and nutrient-rich conditions needed to grow them.*
- *Between 1996 and 2014, there were 43 outbreaks, 2,405 illnesses, and 171 hospitalizations, and 3 deaths associated with sprouts, including the first documented outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* associated with sprouts in the United States. Requirements specific to sprouts include, for example:*
 - *Taking measures to prevent the introduction of dangerous microbes into or onto seeds or beans used for sprouting, in addition to treating seeds or beans that will be used for sprouting (or relying on prior treatment by the seed/bean grower, distributor, or supplier with appropriate documentation).*
 - *Testing of spent sprout irrigation water from each production batch of sprouts, or in-process sprouts from each production batch, for certain pathogens. Sprouts cannot be allowed to enter commerce until it is ascertained that these required pathogen test results are negative.*
 - *Testing the growing, harvesting, packing and holding environment for the presence of *Listeria* species or *Listeria monocytogenes*.*
 - *Taking corrective actions if spent sprout irrigation water, sprouts, and/or an environmental sample tests positive.*
- *In January 2017, FDA issued a draft guidance to help sprout operations comply with the applicable requirements in the Produce Safety rule.*
- *The first compliance date for the largest sprout operations began on January 26, 2017.*

4. Domesticated and Wild Animals

- *The rule addresses concerns about the feasibility of compliance for farms that rely on grazing animals (such as livestock) or working animals for various purposes. It establishes the same standards for these animals as it*

does for intrusion by wild animals (such as deer or feral swine). Farmers are required to take all measures reasonably necessary to identify and not harvest produce that is likely to be contaminated.

- At a minimum, this requires all covered farms to visually examine the growing area and all covered produce to be harvested, regardless of the harvest method used.
- In addition, under certain circumstances the rule requires farms to do additional assessment during the growing season, and if significant evidence of potential contamination by animals is found, to take measures reasonably necessary to assist later during harvest. Such measures might include, for example, placing flags outlining the affected area.
- Although the final rule does not require establishing waiting periods between grazing and harvest, the FDA encourages farmers to voluntarily consider applying such intervals as appropriate for the farm's commodities and practices. The agency will consider providing guidance on this practice in the future, as needed.
- Farms are not required to exclude animals from outdoor growing areas, destroy animal habitat, or clear borders around growing or drainage areas. Nothing in the rule should be interpreted as requiring or encouraging such actions.

5. Worker Training and Health and Hygiene

- Requirements for health and hygiene include:
 - Taking measures to prevent contamination of produce and food-contact surfaces by ill or infected persons, for example, instructing personnel to notify their supervisors if they may have a health condition that may result in contamination of covered produce or food contact surfaces.
 - Using hygienic practices when handling (contacting) covered produce or food-contact surfaces, for example, washing and drying hands thoroughly at certain times such as after using the toilet.
 - Taking measures to prevent visitors from contaminating covered produce and/or food-contact surfaces, for example, by making toilet and hand-washing facilities accessible to visitors.
- Farm workers who handle covered produce and/or food-contact surfaces, and their supervisors, must be trained on certain topics, including the importance of health and hygiene.
- Farm workers who handle covered produce and/or food contact surfaces, and their supervisors, are also required to have a combination of training, education and experience necessary to perform their assigned responsibilities. This could include training (such as training provided on the job), in combination with education, or experience (e.g., work experience related to current assigned duties).

6. Equipment, Tools and Buildings

- The rule establishes standards related to equipment, tools and buildings to prevent these sources, and inadequate sanitation, from contaminating

produce. This section of the rule covers, for example, greenhouses, germination chambers, and other such structures, as well as toilet and hand-washing facilities.

- *Required measures to prevent contamination of covered produce and food contact surfaces include, for example, appropriate storage, maintenance and cleaning of equipment and tools.*

Meat, Dairy, Eggs

Producers agree to follow all USDA regulations pertaining to the farming, insurance, processing, storage, and distribution of meat, eggs, and dairy products.

Processed Foods, Value-Added, Eggs

Producers agree to follow all federal and state regulations with food processing, permitting, insurance, and licensing.

Service Providers

We will set out SOPs for Service providers as they are developed and on a case by case basis.