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Comment Period Open for Food Safety Modernization Act Proposed Rules

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has proposed two new food safety rules as part of the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and both are available for public comment until May 16th, 2013.

The *Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce* rule proposes enforceable safety standards for the production and harvesting of produce on farms. The *Current Good Manufacturing Practices and Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* rule would require makers of food to be sold in the United States, whether produced at a foreign- or domestic-based facility, to develop a formal plan for preventing food products from causing foodborne illness.

FDA is seeking nationwide comment on both proposed rules from all stakeholders, including state agencies, producer groups and the public. In response to the request for comments, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets (VAAFAM) has formed an internal group of critical staff to evaluate the rules and generate comments for submission to FDA. "Our internal group is actively working with the Vermont Department of Health, University of Vermont Extension, and farm and food producer groups to evaluate the potential effects of FSMA on Vermont's agricultural community," said Chuck Ross, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.

VAAFAM highly encourages all growers, manufacturers, and anyone interested in fresh produce safety and manufacturing of human food to comment on the rules. The comment period will remain open until May 16, 2013. A full copy of the proposed rules is available for viewing through the following links:
Produce - <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm334114.htm>
Current Good Manufacturing Practices - <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FSMA/ucm334114.htm>

There are two ways to submit comments to FDA:

- 1) Comment electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=FDA-2011-N-0921>
- 2) Written comments may be faxed to the FDA at 301-827-6870 or you may mail them to:

Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

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About the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets: VAAFMM facilitates, supports and encourages the growth and viability of agriculture in Vermont while protecting the working landscape, human health, animal health, plant health, consumers and the environment.

www.vermontagriculture.com

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