

Sample SOP: Worker Training to Identify, Report, and Respond to Animal Activity and Fecal Contamination in Produce Production Areas

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1—Purpose

Describes how workers are to identify, report, and respond to animal activity in produce production areas.

2—Scope

Applies to farm personnel including workers, owners, and managers.

3—Responsibility

Farm owners, managers, and workers must be able to recognize the signs of animal activity and take corrective actions to prevent the harvesting and packing of fresh produce.

4—Materials

- Worker training materials (videos, handouts, teaching notes)

5—Procedure

To be included in training programs for all workers and reviewed on an annual basis. Workers should:

- A. Be able to identify signs of wildlife or domestic animal intrusion such as: downed fences, damaged product, presence of fecal material, animal tracks, or other indicators that the crop may be contaminated.
- B. Be instructed to report any food safety concerns in the field or packing area to a designated person who can determine what corrective actions to take.
- C. Workers should be instructed to NOT harvest or pack any product that is in close proximity to¹ or in direct contact with fecal material.
- D. Establish a buffer zone¹ around any fecal material as designated by the farm food safety plan.
- E. Follow procedures for proper removal and disposal of fecal material and contaminated product.
- F. Be instructed to wash their hands with soap and water after handling contaminated product or fecal material.
- G. Be instructed to wash and sanitize all tools, equipment, and other items that came into contact with or were used for the removal of contaminated product or fecal contamination.

If fecal contamination is identified in the field, it is recommended that a buffer zone around the contamination be established and that no product in the buffer zone be harvested. These buffer zones should be a minimum of a 5 foot radius from the contaminated crop or feces, depending on the crop type, climate, and contamination event.