GrowNYC’s FARMroots provides aspiring and established farmers with business technical assistance and training designed to ensure the long-term viability of farms and farmland.

FSMA Produce Rule Update: Compliance Begins on Large Farms
by Jack Hornickel

As of January 26, large farms (those with $500k in total sales) must comply with the Produce Rule. But don’t worry: inspections are still delayed until Spring of 2019 for the FDA to finish preparing official guidance documents for farmers and state agencies. Small ($250-$500k sales) and very small (up to $250k sales) farms will be expected to comply in January of 2019 and 2020, respectively.

Since the FDA has yet again delayed enforcement, your farm might as well use this growing season as a pilot run of food safety practices. The best approach to food safety on farms is to create a routine that minimizes risk of contamination, what some folks refer to as a “culture of food safety.”

Here is what the FSMA Produce Rule requires, generally, and some basic first steps to take.

Cover Crops and Their Long-Term Economic Impact

Long-term (10 years or more) studies are hard to find, especially in sustainable agriculture where science based facts come from studies that last three to five years.

Christopher Boyer, had a different perspective. Back in the 80’s he started an experiment to see how no-till and cover crops can impact cotton yields. Recently, the University of Tennessee published Boyer's 29-year long study.

The researchers concluded that no-till planting can reduce cotton producers' exposure to economical risk. Although conventional tillage practices, at the short term, result in higher profits than no-till practices, the long-term benefits are clear, the yield variability decreased, thus the risk.

If you are interested in learning more about tillage in the Northeast, visit the Cornell Small Farms website on reduce tillage in vegetables.

Help Us to Help You!

Do you manage employees on a farm? Do you need help...
recruiting and retaining good staff? Please take this brief survey and share important feedback that will help shape our new Labor Ready Farmer project.

The logistic of trucking are often a challenge to many farmers. We would like to understand the current trucking infrastructure available across all of the Greenmarket producer, so please fill out this short 8 question survey: Shared Trucking and Deliveries Survey

Resources

The Podcast of the month (recommended by Erik Hassert, our marketing specialist) is the Farmer To Farmer Podcast.

Webinars:

Hoophouse Soil Management, on February 22nd, 7:30-8:30 pm
Excel for Farmers, on February 27th, 12:00 pm
Hoophouse Harvesting and Handling, on March 1, 7:30-8:30 pm
Hoophouse Marketing and Economics on March 8, 7:30-8:30 pm

Books:

Financing Your Farm: Guidance for Beginning Farmers
Sowing the Seeds of Food Justice a guide coordinated by Soul Fire Farm

Events:

Raising Pigs on Pasture, March 20th, CCE Ulster County
Farmworker Grape Pruning Training in English and Spanish, March 30 at the Red Maple Vineyard led by CCE

Courses on Propagation and Growing Soils taught in NYC by the Farm School NYC on March-April

Funding

Small Business Innovation Research Program (Phase II) Stimulates technological innovations in the private sector and strengthens the role of federal research and development in support of small businesses. Applications are currently being solicited for Phase II. Eligible applicants include previous SBIR Phase I awardees who have not applied for Phase II support. Apply for the grant and view the RFA here. Closing date for applications is March 8.

The Annie’s Sustainable Agriculture Scholarships is For undergraduate or graduate students focusing in organic and/or regenerative agriculture. The deadline is March 15th

GrowNYC Annual Report 2017

Check out GrowNYC’s 2017 Annual Report to see all the incredible things YOU helped make happen last year! We hope you’re as proud as we are!

Report’s Link
By shopping at your neighborhood Greenmarket farmers market, you are directly supporting small family farms and ensuring continued access to fresh local food for all New Yorkers.

Farmroots is a program of GrowNYC, a 501(c)3 nonprofit. Learn more about GrowNYC's community gardens, recycling and hands-on education programs and make a donation to support small family farms [here](#).