



Episode Thirty Four – Summary and thank yous

Welcome to episode 34 of Food Safety Bites, brought to you by the University of Wisconsin Madison, and funded by the USDA Food Safety Outreach Program. This is your host Harriet Behar. This is the final episode summarizing this series and thanking those who were part of this project.

Everyone in the food system is affected by produce safety. Consumers want safe food to eat, and don't want to worry that what they buy could make themselves or their families, sick. Farmers don't want the long hours and months that it took to grow their produce to be for naught, if they need to destroy produce that might be contaminated, nor do they want to make others sick. Businesses do not want to have empty produce racks and restaurants don't want to tell their customers that they cannot make their famous spinach omelet, due to their orders not being fulfilled or needing to destroy produce they have in their coolers because it could be contaminated.

The managers and workers on produce farms can set up systems and implement activities that result in safe produce for their customers. These systems rely on everyone knowing why and how to implement them and doing the activities consistently. Documentation of observations in the field and tracking of harvest and post-harvest activities provide the historical knowledge to continually improve the processes, as well as limiting and hopefully eliminating any possible recalls that might be needed to prevent illness.

It is my hope that you found these numerous podcasts helpful in developing systems that are tailored to your own farm's situation and worker's needs. Each operation will have their own challenges and there are solutions that I may not have mentioned. I encourage you to develop your own appropriate and effective protocols for specific situations of food safety issues you may encounter, based on the understanding that you now have.

These series of podcasts were originally proposed by Chris Blanchard. His untimely death was a blow to the farming community, and specifically the organic farming community. Chris was my friend and coworker, and he is still sorely missed by myself and many others. He coined the phrase "keep the poop off the food", and I thought of Chris whenever I used that phrase throughout these podcasts. His friends have kept his website live so you can hear his farmer to farmer podcasts. Go to www.purplepitchfork.com, all one word, with no dots or dashes. He also had recorded some food safety podcasts for the Wisconsin Farmers Union before his passing, which you can find on wisconsinfarmersunion.com/podcast. All spelled out, no abbreviations. Thank you Chris.

A super huge thank you to Annalisa Hultberg, the statewide extension educator in food safety with the University of Minnesota. She is also the Minnesota state lead for the North Central Region Food Safety Modernization Act training center and the National GAPs Program. Annalisa is a lead trainer with the Produce Safety Alliance.



Annalisa reviewed all of my written notes for these podcasts, as well as all of the recordings. She supplied valuable feedback, that resulted in episodes with easy to understand information as well as adding in here and there, excellent examples of situations and solutions. Thirty-four episodes is a large number, and she kept up with the flood of information I sent to her, what a trooper! I was always excited to see an email from her with her comments, since I knew she would provide excellent suggestions.

At the University of Wisconsin, I would like to thank Dr. Erin Silva, under whose leadership I produced these podcasts. Dr. Silva in addition to her work within the University with organic and sustainable cropping systems, is also a lead trainer for the Produce Safety Alliance. Jody Padgham, outreach specialist, also gave me valuable feedback and when I was unsure how to handle a specific topic. She always had good ideas to put me on the right path.

There are numerous links on the website where you found these podcasts, some from the Produce Safety Alliance which provides training to those who train growers about the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. They are based out of Cornell University, but operate nationally. Their website is chock full of excellent resources and further links that answer some of the very technical information associated with the Produce Safety Rule in particular.

Many State Extension offices around the country have superb information for their regional growers. I encourage everyone to get in touch with their own state's extension, to access the many excellent fact sheets, work books, food safety plan templates, trainings and resources (such as local water testing laboratories) that address the questions and unique aspects of growing produce in your state.

The music you hear at the beginning and end of the food safety bites episodes was composed and performed by Ann Christoffer, a singer and songwriter from the Driftless Region of Iowa and Wisconsin. More information about Ann is on website where you found these food safety bites episodes.

Lastly, I would like to thank you, my listeners, for taking the time to learn how to implement common sense solutions for food safety. Your understanding and implementation of produce safety activities will over time, become less of an additional burden on your time and resources and instead will become integral to your farm and then...second nature. Remember, if you need a refresher on any topic, you know where to find these podcasts!

So that's it for this final episode of Food Safety Bites. This is your host Harriet Behar brought to you by the University of Wisconsin Madison, thank you for your attention to these many episodes and your commitment to produce safety!