

How to Market your GAPs Certification and Connect with Buyers



NC State Extension
March 11, 2021

Agenda

- Introductions and housekeeping
- Review of Part 1 and Part 2 GAPs program
 - Benefits of getting GAPs certified
 - Financial and technical support for the process
 - Types of GAPs
- Considerations for determining best market channels
- Buyers and their requirements
- Tips for marketing and communication
- Buyer presentation and panel
- Small group breakout session
- Final thoughts and wrap up



- To access your zoom control panel move your cursor to the bottom of the screen until controls appear.
- Please mute yourself by clicking on the microphone image
- For those with poor internet connection turn off your video
- Please introduce yourself in the chat and tell us where you are from

If we get “zoom bombed” log off and rejoin in 5 minutes

Review: On-Farm Food Safety Basics & GAP Certification



Elena Rogers

Area Specialized Agent,
Agriculture Food Safety -
Fresh Produce Western NC

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***Goal of growing safe produce
Reducing microbial contamination,
preventing foodborne illness by identifying
risks and implementing practices at a farm.***

- On farm & field operations assessment
- Management responsibility and implementing the plan
- Worker health, hygiene, facilities and training
- Activities during the growing season
- Harvest and post harvest activities
- Traceability and recall program

Template of GAP Food Safety Plan

Appendix 8.1

Traceability Log

Harvest Date	ID #	Product	Field	Shipment Date	Destination

Appendix 6.1

Composted/Treated Manure Log

Application Date	Field/Location	Rate	Source of Composted/Treated Manure	Documentation of sufficient composting level*

To schedule audits contact
Matthew Marx
 NCDA&CS
 Office: (828)
 253-1691 ext. 2
matthew.marx@ncagr.gov

<https://ncfreshproducesafety.ces.ncsu.edu/ncfreshproducesafety-gaps-food-safety-plans/>

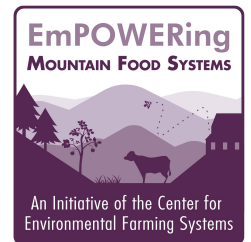
Resources for Gap Certification

Financial:

- EmPOWERING Mountain Food Systems
- Cost Share with NC Department of Ag
 - Kevin Hardison at 919-707-3123 or Kevin.Hardison@ncagr.gov

Technical Support:

- Extension
- Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
- Private consultants



Benefits of GAPs Certification

- Ensure customers receive safe produce
- Increases marketability
- More options for selling produce
- Decreases risk of liability issues
- Can get listed on national and local websites
- Can use GAP logo on product
- Better prepared when there is a food safety recall
- Greater resilience to food safety recalls
- Promotes positive image for all farmers





Companies that Meet USDA GAP&GHP Acceptance Criteria

The following table shows companies that have been audited by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit and Vegetable Programs for the audit type, audit scopes, and commodities listed below and have successfully demonstrated an acceptable level of adherence to the audit standard being audited. The audit results are valid for one (1) year from the date shown, and are validated through the use of unannounced audit(s) throughout the growing/packing season.

Company	Address	City, State	Audit Type	Scope(s) of Audit Conducted	Date Audit Conducted	Commodities Covered by Audit
United States						
North Carolina						
4D Farms	1005 Devil's Racetrack Road	Seaboard, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review, Field Harvesting and Field Packing Activities	November 17, 2020	Sweet Potatoes
A J Evans and Son Produce Farm	515 Evans Bass Road	Edenton, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review	June 10, 2020	Cantaloups, Corn, Watermelons
A W Bunch Farms, LLC	335 Evans Bass Road, 145 Peanut Drive and 209 Charles Street	Edenton/Elizabeth City, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review	July 8, 2020	Cantaloups, Corn, Watermelons
A.R. McCraw Farms	1246 N. Ridge Rd.	Hendersonville, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review, Field Harvesting and Field Packing Activities	September 1, 2020	Apples
Albemarle Beach Farms - Watermelons	6210 Mackeys Road	Roper, NC	Produce GAPs Harmonized Audit	Field Operations and Harvesting	August 3, 2020	Watermelons
Albermarle Beach Farms	6210 Mackey's Rd	Roper, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review, Field Harvesting and Field Packing Activities, House Packing Facility	July 15, 2020	Corn
Allen Acres	475 Indian Run Road	Pantego, NC	Produce GAPs Harmonized Audit	Field Operations and Harvesting	June 12, 2020	Beans
Almaraz Farms	380 N. Beaverdam Rd.	Candler, NC	Produce GAPs Harmonized Audit	Field Operations and Harvesting	September 15, 2020	Tomatoes
Altar Cross Farms (Harmonized GAP Plus+)	4108 Ivanhoe Road	Ivanhoe, NC	Produce GAPs Harmonized Audit	Field Operations and Harvesting	July 10, 2020	Blueberries
Ann Angus Farms Inc	4643 Old Wilson Road	Rocky Mount, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review, Field Harvesting and Field Packing Activities	October 13, 2020	Sweet Potatoes
Appalachian Produce Co., LLC	535 Napo Road	Sparta, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit	Farm Review, Field Harvesting and Field Packing Activities	October 14, 2020	Pumpkins
Apple Hill Orchards - (Harmonized GAP Plus+)	1273 Bearwallow Rd.	Hendersonville, NC	Produce GAPs Harmonized Audit	Field Operations and Harvesting	September 30, 2020	Apples
Apple Ridge Farm, LLC	31 Apple Ridge Farm Lane	Hendersonville, NC	USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices	House Packing Facility, Storage and Transportation	October 7, 2020	Apples

Types of Food Safety Certifications

- GAPs
- Commodity Specific GAPs
- Group GAPs
- Produce Safety Alliance
- GHPs
- GMPs
- HACCP/acidified foods (value added foods)

Types of Buyers

- Direct markets vs. wholesale/distributor
- Schools and universities
- Hospitals
- Resorts and conference centers
- Distributor
- Wholesaler
- Broker
- Packinghouse
- Grocery stores
- Restaurants
- Farm stands
- End consumer



Considerations when determining the best place to sell your produce

- **Buyer Requirements**
- **Volume**
 - What is your capacity to scale up?
- **Price Point**
 - What are the costs of production for your operation?
- **Time**
 - How do you want to use your time & hired labor? Are you ok with traveling a lot?
- **Resources**
 - What are your skill sets? Are you a people person?
 - What is your capacity packing and distribution?

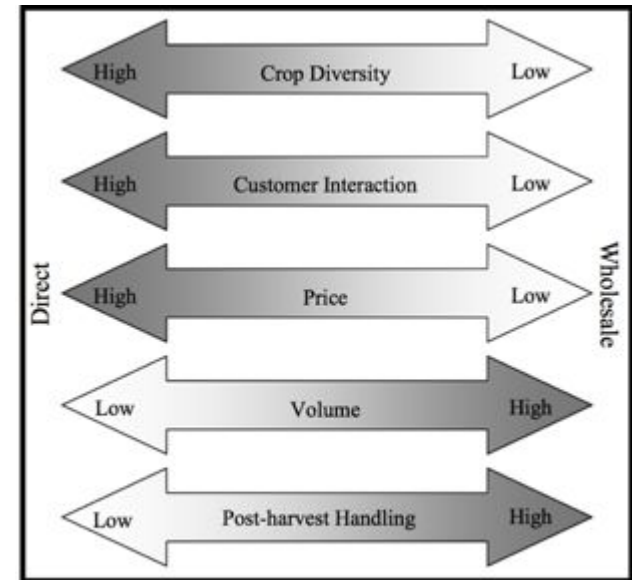


Figure 1: Generalizations about Wholesale and Direct Marketing Channels.

Other Considerations

- **Insurance**
.
- **Certifications - Organic, GAPs, etc.**
.
- **Vendor application process**
.
- **Post harvest handling**
.
- **Packaging**
.
- **Pricing**

How do you evaluate a market opportunity?

Six interacting factors impact the “performance” of a marketing channel including:



Conduct a market assessment

Marketing Channel	Volume	Price	Risk	Labor Required	Assoc. Costs	Total Score	Final Rank
Self-serve farm stand	1	2	2	1	2	8	1
Farmers' Market	2	1	2	3	1	9	2
Restaurant	3	2	1	1	2	9	2

	Farmers' Market	CSA	Farm Stand	U-Pick	Distributor	Grocery	Restaurant
Risks	Low customer turn-out, price competition, leftover unsold product.	Farmer commitment up-front, customers share the risk.	Low customer turn-out.	Low customer turn-out. Weather. People on the farm.	Distributors "call the shots." Inconsistent orders, buyer back-out.	Inconsistent orders, buyer back-out.	Unpaid debts, buyer back-out. Can be slow to pay.
Prices & Profit	Prices varies. Can be highest among the channels. Labor costs relatively high.	Price is similar to wholesale, however, profit is generally higher.	Prices vary, but high profit potential. Location is a big factor in price.	Prices vary, high profit potential. Location is a big factor in price.	Price is low: Producer is a "price taker." Wholesale prices are generally low.	Price is low: Producer is a "price taker." Wholesale prices are generally low.	Prices vary. Usually higher than other wholesale prices.
Volume	Varies with market. Low to medium.	High: It is possible to "move" all the produce harvested.	Medium to low; location and competition dependant.	Medium to low; location and competition dependant.	High	High to variable.	Variable, usually small.
Level of Marketing Management Required	High: Many hours dedicated to selling. Most markets run 3-5 hours/day.	High: Must sell memberships & facilitate weekly share pick-ups. Less post-harvest work.	Variable: Ranges from unstaffed honor system to staffed stores.	Variable: Ranges from unstaffed honor system to staff supervision. Must advertise.	Low: Relatively quick & easy for volume sold. Must meet packing standards.	Low: Relatively quick & easy for volume sold. Must meet packing standards.	Variable: A high level of service for the volume sold.
Associated Costs	Market fees, equipment, travel, hired labor.	Packaging materials, advertising, brochures.	Road side signs and other advertising. Sales staff is optional.	Road side signs and other advertising. Sales staff is optional.	Washing, cooling & packing equipment for high volumes. Delivery costs.	Washing, cooling & packing equipment for high volumes. Delivery costs.	Washing, cooling & packing equipment for high volumes. Delivery costs.
Farmer Stress	Low: "Show up or don't show up."	Low to medium. Must meet customer expectations weekly.	Variable: Depending on overhead & scale.	Low	High: Distributors cited as highest stress customers.	Medium to high.	Medium to high.

Grocery Stores

- Larger volume (variable)
- Insurance and food safety plans often required
- single or multiple locations
- standard sizes/packing
- Each store/chain has unique purchasing procedure



Tips for Connecting with Grocers

- Start with small and local grocers
- Look for “local foods” signs at grocers
- Utilize available resources and connections (i.e. ASAP Local Food Program or commodity specific associations)
- Partner with local distribution companies
- Call the corporate office and request contact information for buyer or assistant buyer
- Get on their radar every way you can
- Attend trade shows
- Utilize private grocery marketing firms (i.e. Mr. Checkout)

Schools

- Most school systems require GAPs
- Each district has their own buying process and vendor enrollment
- Most utilize one produce vendor and other local farms for seasonal produce
- Often require large quantities, specific quality grade and specific time frames
- More flexibility and opportunity for special events like taste tests
- Some schools have Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program



<https://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/farmers/how-to-sell-to-schools/>

<https://ncfarmtoschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/10-things-to-know-about-school-food.pdf>

Preschool

- Private preschools usually have meal programs but do not require GAPs
- Daycare providers are a much smaller scale and usually have feeding programs and do not require GAPs

NC FARM to
PRESCHOOL
NETWORK

Other institutional buyers

- Highest volume, low price point.
- Highest level of purchasing requirements, often requires selling through distributor or going through bid process
- Often, but not always, requires GAPs
- Variable buying practices - Most likely buys through a distributor but may also purchase from farmer
- Educational resources or training on buying local can support these opportunities
- Examples: universities, hospitals, resorts, casinos

Healthy Food in Health Care

2018-2019



Health care institutions are adopting practices to support a food system that is environmentally sustainable, improves nutritional quality, and supports human dignity and justice.

LESS MEAT



69%
reduced
meat
served

BETTER MEAT



69%
are choosing to
purchase meat
products raised
without routine
antibiotics, up from
49%
in 2014

SUSTAINABLE



70%
purchased
sustainable
foods, averaging
\$310,255
annually

LOCAL



79%
purchased
local foods,
averaging
\$245,700
annually

HOSPITAL FOOD HUB



14%
have fruit and
vegetable
prescription
programs

HEALTH BEYOND HOSPITAL WALLS



26%
make grants and
other investments
to support healthy
food through
community benefit
programs

1/3 OF U.S. HOSPITALS ARE PART OF OUR NETWORK

Trends show U.S. hospitals are changing the food system. Check out [2019 health care food trends](#).

Restaurants

- Highly variable, usually close to retail price point
- May or may not require GAPs
- Chef may buy from distributor, farmers market, directly from the farmer or even a grocery store
- Relationship building and communication are key



LOCALLY SOURCED & DELICIOUSLY QUIRKY:

nestled in the heart of Western North Carolina's Smoky Mountains
in sweet little Sylva NC, we're an independent restaurant
that's been serving up farm fresh flavors with a creative, global twist since 2004

Direct Markets

- Higher prices
- Direct relationship with consumers
- Easiest entry point for small producers
- Often does not require GAPs
- Can be time intensive
- Requires “people” skills



Barriers to selling local foods

- Volume
- Product variety
- Communication
- Inconsistencies
- Delivery time/ logistics
- Pricing - budget of buyer
- Packaging
- Locating local product



Marketing your Local Foods

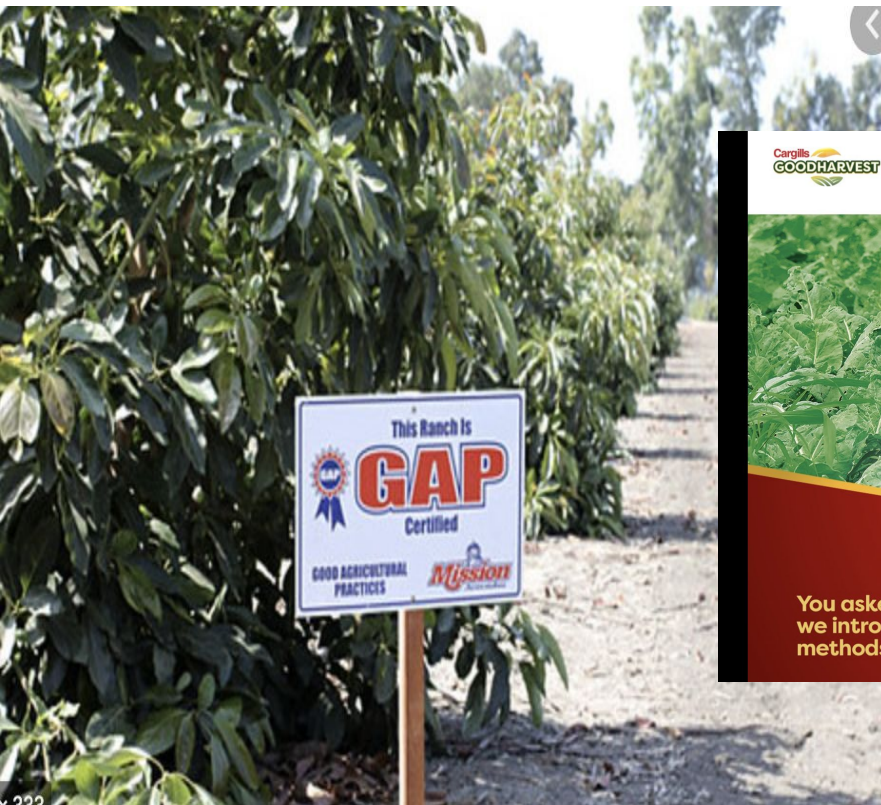
- Have a marketing plan which includes multiple strategies
- Relationships and communication are key
- Provide good quality food and good quality service
- Utilize local resources such as Appalachian grown program
- Connect with Small Business Center to help write a marketing plan
- Promote on social media
- Promote your GAPs at every step



Components of a marketing plan

- Market research and analysis
- Financial goals and objectives
- Marketing strategies
 - Product, price, place and promotion
- Marketing budget
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Contingency plans
- Marketing checklist

Examples of Successful GAPs Marketing





Richmond County Center

123 Caroline St, Suite 100, Rockingham, NC

HOURS: MON-FRI 8A-5P

(910) 997-8255

Richmond Co. Center is open, doors are locked to monitor access. Masks, sign in requested on entry. Phone calls and emails are encouraged.

Search

- COVID-19 Resources
- Events
- Meet Our Staff
- COVID-19 Resources
Resources for Agribusiness Food Safety
Resources Home and Community ...
- Poultry
- Richmond County 4-H
4-H Farm Credit Circuit Richmond County
4-H Clubs 4-H Winter Calendar of Events
...
- Family and Consumer Sciences in Richmond County
Available Programs in FCS
Extension Master Food Volunteers
Resources
- Home & Family
- 4-H Youth Development
- Agriculture & Food

How Lee Berry Is Getting GAP Certified

—Written By [Nancy Power](#) (4 weeks ago)



Over the years, local farmer Lee Berry of Berry Patch fame attended many workshops on getting GAP certified. GAP, which stands for “Good Agricultural Practices,” is a voluntary set of procedures to protect consumers from foodborne illness by requiring certain production practices and product traceability. However, Berry never took the plunge to make it official. Recently he has found opportunities to sell the collards and sweet potatoes he grows for his produce stand to wholesale markets, such as the Sandhills AGInnovation Center (SAIC) in Ellerbe. Many

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 - Good Agricultural Practices Horticulture

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#goodagriculturalpractices



squarerootsgrow · Follow
Brooklyn, New York



Verizon

4:32 PM



TOP POSTS

#goodagriculturalpractices



334 likes

squarerootsgrow "As a food producer it is our responsibility to hold ourselves to a standard that prioritizes safety for, not only our consumers, but also our workers. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) requires us to adhere to those standards, and to continuously implement, record and analyze risk assessments throughout the year while methods and procedures are changing." - Gianna Costa, Square Roots Assistant Farm Manager, on why voluntary, external audits of our growing practices—like the USDA's GAP audit—are so important. Learn more about how we're prioritizing plant and people safety during COVID-19 at the link in bio. 🙌🌱📷:
@planthealthyways #squarerootsgrow #realfood #localfood #indoorag #indoorfarming #urbanfarming #urbanag #urbanagriculture #goodagriculturalpractices #urbanfarmer #knowyourfarmer #knowyourfood #cea #controlledenvironmentagriculture

View all 5 comments

July 11, 2020



topraktantabaga · Follow



Relationships are Everything

- This applies to retail & wholesale
- Know yourself, strengths & weaknesses
- Samples, samples, samples
- Communication is key

Communication

- Be persistent, ask for feedback, and be responsible for follow through, if you don't have it...let them know!!!
- I talk to buyers all the time that say farmers never call them back....if you don't have what they're looking for, tell them what else you have.

Final Thoughts

- Do your homework
- Have your documentation
- Ask questions
- Sell your story
- Be accessible
- Be persistent
- Be flexible and pursue multiple options

Questions?



Contact:

Lisa Gonzalez

828-389-6305

lcgonzal@ncsu.edu



Jessica Mrugala

jmrugal@ncsu.edu



Craig Mauney

rcmauney@ncsu.edu

Guest Presentations and Panel

- David Smiley - ASAP, Appalachian Grown Logo & Local Food Guide
- Kim Terrell - Macon / Clay FCS speaking as former Macon School Nutrition Director
- Lauren Horning - FreshPoint Charlotte



Resources For Farmers



David Smiley
Program Manager
david@asapconnections.org
(828)772-8924



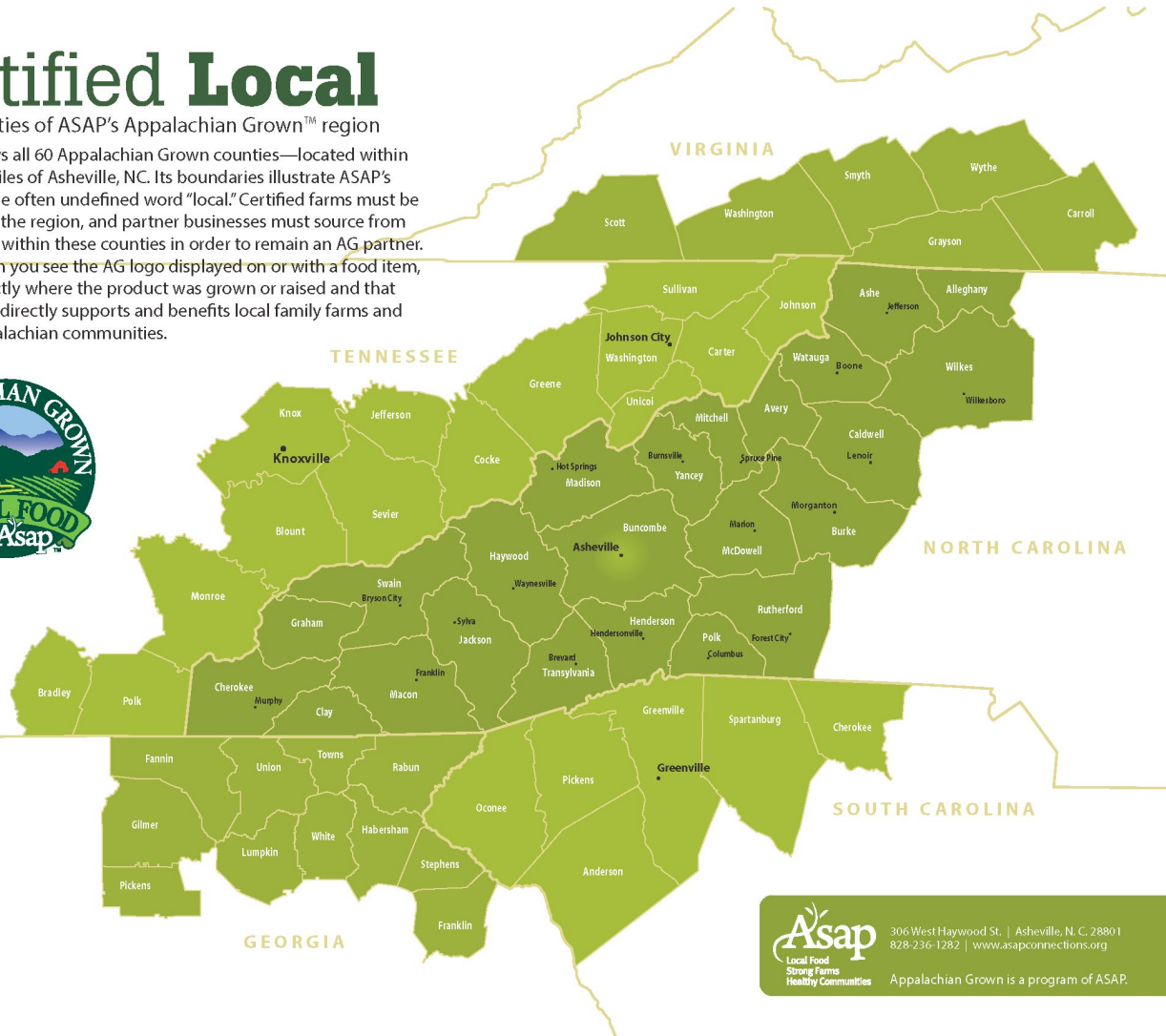
Our **mission** is to help local farms thrive,
link farmers to markets and supporters,
and build healthy communities
through connections to local food.

Certified Local

The 60 counties of ASAP's Appalachian Grown™ region

This map shows all 60 Appalachian Grown counties—located within roughly 100 miles of Asheville, NC. Its boundaries illustrate ASAP's definition of the often undefined word "local." Certified farms must be located within the region, and partner businesses must source from certified farms within these counties in order to remain an AG partner.

That way, when you see the AG logo displayed on or with a food item, you know exactly where the product was grown or raised and that your purchase directly supports and benefits local family farms and Southern Appalachian communities.



Asap
Local Food
Strong Farms
Healthy Communities

306 West Haywood St. | Asheville, N. C. 28801
828-236-1282 | www.asapconnections.org

Appalachian Grown is a program of ASAP.

ASAP - Farm Consultation Topics

- **Market planning and assessment**
 - Exploration of potential market opportunities, grower-buyer connections, understanding market requirements, tips for selling into various markets, accessing capital, etc.
- **Marketing**
 - Telling your farm story, branding, promotional opportunities, strategies for improving sales, social media tips, etc.

All farmer consultations are completely free.

Ag Resource Connector



Purchase packaging materials today

labels – signs – produce bags
rubber bands – twist ties





About ▾
Our mission, vision, team, and more.

Resources ▾
For building a better local food movement.

Consulting & Research ▾
Learn about our services.

Events ▾
For farmers and local food enthusiasts.

Find Local Food ▾
Your way to the freshest food around.

Support and Volunteer ▾
ASAP and the local food movement.

Farmers and Producers

Find resources and tools for your farm business.

[READ MORE](#) ▶▶




Local Food Guide
ASAP's Local Food Guide



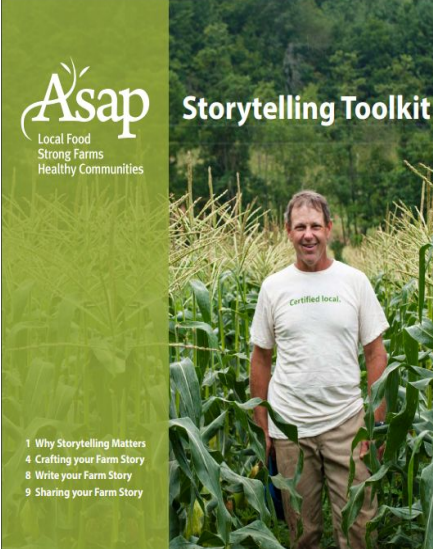
Farmers and Producers
Find resources and tools for your farm business.



Appalachian Grown™ Certified Local
Certified local food in the Southern Appalachians.



Growing Minds Farm to School
Get Involved with Farm to School



ASAP
Local Food Strong Farms Healthy Communities

Storytelling Toolkit

- 1 Why Storytelling Matters
- 4 Crafting your Farm Story
- 8 Write your Farm Story
- 9 Sharing your Farm Story



A Social Media Guide for Farmers

Introduction

What is social media?
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat — “social media” is the collective term for these websites and applications. Unlike traditional media, where a single author or organization talks to a passive audience, social media serves as a place for public conversations between many users. People use social media to share and discuss their daily lives, including their buying habits, with friends and family. It's entire word-of-mouth, available for free to anyone. And just like word-of-mouth, social media can have a huge impact on the success of your business.

Why does social media benefit my business?
You should care about social media because your customers do. Of all adults in the US, 64 percent use Facebook, and 64 percent of those users visit the site every day. A third of all US adults use sites such as Instagram and Pinterest. Among millennials, over 90 percent regularly use social media. Simply put, the people who will buy from you spend a lot of time looking at social media. You should make sure your business is in front of their eyes.

How do I use it?
The most important thing to remember about social media is that your business shares the same space as your customer's friends. Whatever you do must compete with the daily activities and interests of those personal networks. Instead of simply promoting your business, your goal on social media should be to build a community and participate in conversations. People enjoy learning about the day-to-day stories and interests of your business much more than they enjoy advertising. This neighborly approach will make your business more familiar to potential customers, create good feelings about your brand, and ultimately lead to greater sales.

Photography Tips for the Farm



Equipment
Keep your equipment simple. You can get great pictures with an inexpensive digital camera.

Keep your camera handy
Photo ops often come when you least expect them. Keeping your camera in your garden shed means it is always available for the shot.

Take lots of photos
The more photographs you take, the better the chance you'll get a great one. On average, it takes 30 shots to get one good image.

Make a shot list
Make a point to photograph all of the varieties you produce at their peak. Also take pictures of animals, people working, and events at your farm. A good picture of your bounty on display is always useful. If you can't carry your camera around, note places you'd like to come back and photograph, including important details, like the lighting, time of day or weather.

Communicate with photography
Remember, a picture is worth a thousand words. Photo tell stories and are great fodder for blogging and to refresh your website.

Composition: Chance doesn't always hand you the best shot. Arranging your subjects, changing your perspective, or placing the subject at the side of the frame creates a more dynamic composition. Off-center subjects can be balanced on the opposite side of the frame with leading lines, shadows, and objects in the foreground or background.

Lines: Natural lines can strengthen composition by leading the viewer's eyes toward your subject. Diagonal lines can add energy. Curved lines can add soft elegance. Using a road or path can add depth.

Framing: Framing your subject with elements in the foreground can also add scale and depth to pictures. Overhanging tree branches, doorways, or anything that covers at least two sides of the photo can give a three-dimensional effect that invites viewers into the image.

Perspective: Eye level is great for a lot of shots, but experimentation with different angles. Get up or down on your subject's eye level. This will help give the photo a more personal and inviting feeling.

Exposure: Always give consideration to how your subject is lit. Without light, you'll lose detail and clarity in your image. Watch the light and use it to enhance your composition. The soft, even lighting of cloudy days is great for people pictures. Morning and evening lighting are also lighter and cast nice hues on your subjects.

Black & White: Removing color can add impact by eliminating competing colors. Backlighting and using silhouettes in your photo can add contrast, and make it more interesting. Converting your photo to black and white can also have a pooly-expected or grainy image.

Backgrounds: Be aware of your background. Change your position to eliminate unimportant elements and background clutter.

Crop It: Sometimes things happen quickly and you don't have enough time to set up your shot. So shoot wider and edit later. A zoom in on the subject can show nice details and add contrast to your photo.

ASAP
Local Food Strong Farms Healthy Communities

ASAP | 300 West Haywood St., 1 Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-256-1282 | www.asapconnections.org

Farmer Workshops



Online Local Food Guide (free)

ASAP's Local Food Guide | Find Local Food | Why Buy Local? | Get In The Guide | Wholesale | Facebook | Twitter | Login

LOCAL FOOD GUIDE

PLACES & PRODUCTS

Welcome to ASAP's Local Food Guide

Find local farms and local food with this Local Food Guide for Western North Carolina and the Southern Appalachians. Get connected with fresh local food, the farmers who grow it, and the markets, grocers, and restaurants committed to using locally grown products. Visit asapconnections.org to **view our print version of the guide online** or to **find pickup locations for a copy**.

Find Local Food

Places

- Appalachian Grown™ Farms
- Farmers Tailgate Markets
- Grocery Stores
- Restaurants And Bakeries
- Artisan Food Producers (including cheesemakers, wineries, picklers, etc.)
- Caterers, Bakers and Food Trucks
- Institutions
- Bed And Breakfasts
- Travel Destinations
- Distributors and Wholesalers

Search By Product

Search by Farm or Business Name

Search By Keyword

Open Now

More Options

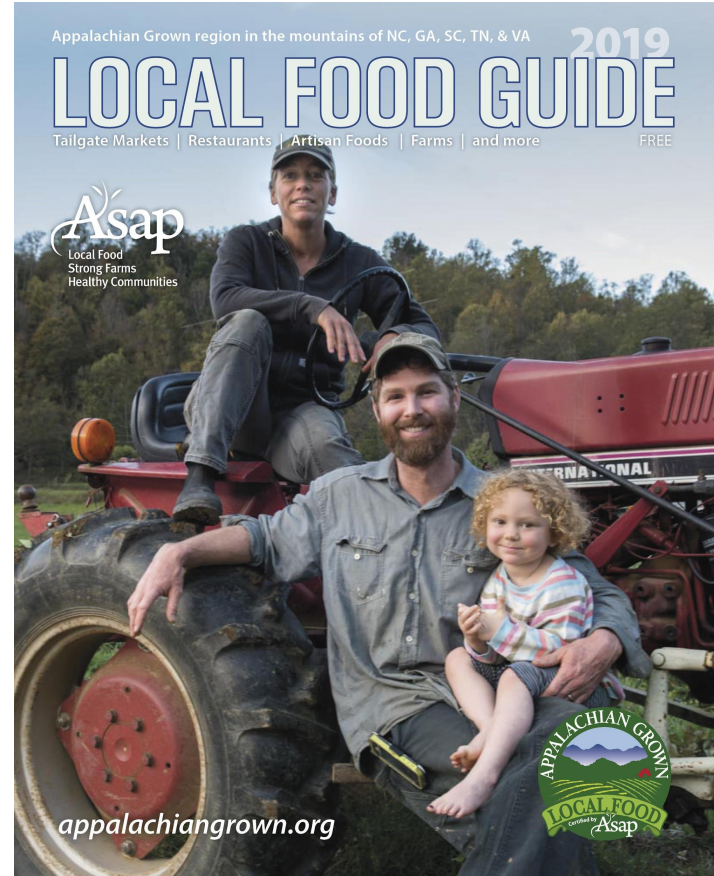
Payments Accepted

Practice

Farm Features

- CSA What's this?

Windows taskbar: Type here to search | 9:59 AM 5/8/2018



NC Farm to School



**Kimberly Terrell, MHS, RDN, LDN
Family & Consumer Science Agent
NC Cooperative Extension Program
Macon & Clay Counties
Former School Nutrition Director for Macon
County**

NC Farm to School

- Farm to School concept started in the U.S. in the early 1990's
- NC Farm to School Program was founded in 1997
- NCDA&CS began working with DOD to source “local” produce from NC Farmers and deliver to schools
- Apples from the west and strawberries from the east were the first crops piloted. Both were successful and the program was expanded statewide the next year



NC Farm to School

- Foster-Caviness Produce Company is the prime vendor for the NC Farm to School Program
- All public school systems are encouraged to participate
- Crops offered: strawberries, apples, sweet potatoes, cabbage, watermelons, cataloupes, slicing and grape tomatoes, broccoli, kale, collards, peaches, Asian pears, romaine, honeydew melon, and blueberries



NC Farm to School

- [Delivery Calendar](#)

Farm to School Works.....

- To create positive school and community benefits
- To stimulate local and regional economies
- To improve children's health, nutrition and academic performance
- To help healthy habits take root early and provide access to local foods all year long

■ Source: 2015 Farm to School Census



NC Farm to School



- Selling Local Food to Schools

- Four Pathways

1. Selling directly to schools
2. Selling to distributors that work with schools
3. Working with the USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (DoD Fresh)
4. Becoming a USDA Foods Vendor

NC Farm to School



● Making the Connection

- School Nutrition Directors coordinate all food purchases

- Know as much as possible about the schools you hope to work with
 - Do they serve breakfast, lunch and supper? Do they offer the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program?
 - How many students/meals do they serve?
 - Which distributors do they currently work with?
 - Meal prep capacity/kitchen, equipment, staff, time, space?
 - Storage capacity?
 - Offer educational opportunities: farm tours, classroom and cafeteria visits

NC Farm to School

● Purchasing Guidelines

- Schools have to follow state and federal procurement process
- SN Director makes the decision on how to procure all foods – NC State Bid (US Foods), DoD Fresh, NC Farm to School, Produce Bid
- Geographic Preference - schools are allowed to define “local products” in their bidding and scoring language



NC Farm to School

- Procurement Threshold and Bidding Process
- [Procurement Decision Tree](#)
- [USDA FNS Procuring Local Foods](#)



NC Farm to School



- Food Safety Modernization Act

- Produce Safety Rule
- Gap Certification
- *Federal law does not require schools to purchase from farms with GAP certification or other third-party food safety certification.*
- *In NC, farmers wanting to sell to schools must have a food safety audit.*

NC Farm to School

- Farm to School Food Safety Resources
 - [NC Food Safety](#)



NC Farm to School

1. What steps does a farmer that wants to sell need to take to get enrolled as a vendor?
2. What are you looking for when buying produce?
3. How do farms with a GAP certification compare with non GAP certification?
4. What are common challenges you as a buyer have when working with farmers to source your product?

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Guest Presentations and Panel

- David Smiley - ASAP, Appalachian Grown Logo & Local Food Guide
- Kim Terrell - Macon / Clay FCS speaking as former Macon School Nutrition Director
- Lauren Horning - FreshPoint Charlotte



Break Out Rooms

Room 1: David

- Learn about ASAP Marketing Tools

Room 2: Kim

- Learn about selling to K-12 Schools & FCS Agent Support

Room 3: Lauren

- Learn how to sell to distributors / grocers

Room 4: Lisa

- Learn about how your Extension Director & Agent can support you

Room 5: Craig

- Learn more about writing your Food Safety Plan

Room 6: Jess

- Learn more about EMFS Funding & Programming



Contact the Panelists



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