

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)
WISCONSIN PRODUCE SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL (PSAC) SPECIAL MEETING**

MINUTES

Date: March 16, 2022

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Location: Microsoft Teams

DATCP Division: Food and Recreational Safety

Welcome and Introductions

Call to order: At 10:02, Wayne called the meeting to order.

Open meeting notice:

This meeting is a public meeting subject to public records requests and information was posted inviting public comments. No public comment was received and members offered no objections to their comments being recorded.

Introduction of members:

Voting members present include:

Sara Ecker, Ecker's Apples; Christopher Fasching, Wescot Agri Products, Inc.; Wayne Geist, Wisconsin Apple Growers Association and Bushel and a Peck Market; Hsing-Yi Hsieh, Festival Foods; Julie Keown-Bomar, Wisconsin Farmers Union; Steve Louis, Oakwood Fruit Farm; Jeffrey Mears, Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council; Susan Quam, Wisconsin Restaurant Association; Josh Rimmert, Alsum Produce; Lavern Zeiset, Zeiset Farm, Communities and Cultures Coordinator.

Voting members not present include:

Daniel Cornelius, Intertribal Agricultural Council; Jay Ellingson, Kwik Trip.

Non-voting members present include:

Caitlin Jeidy, DATCP (*ex officio*); Kevin Leroy, DATCP-USDA (*ex-officio*); Joanna Kahvedjian, DATCP (*ex officio*); Krystal Martin, DATCP (*ex officio*); Amy Millard, DATCP (*ex officio*); Amanda Miller, DATCP (*ex officio*); Michael Mosher, DATCP (*ex-officio*); Bridget Peck, DATCP (*ex-officio*).

Approval of Agenda: Steve moved to approve the agenda. Julie seconded the motion. With no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

DATCP Opening Statement

Krystal started by reading an opening statement written in collaboration with Troy. Market access has been the goal of Safe Wisconsin Produce (SWP) for the entirety of the program. The SWP audits and registry seek to meet that goal but only under the authority and funding for these services given through the Cooperative Agreement with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Krystal explained the three audit/registry options proposed by SWP that were sent to all members prior to the meeting.

1. Finalize registry as originally presented. The visit types would be audit, inspection or blank. As all farms receive education, that will not be included as a visit type, however this can be further elaborated on in the narrative at the top of the registry. The results column would remain, but the listed results would be more general and point to the grower for additional detail. The most common result would be ‘no documented observations’ as this program aligns with FDA inspection expectations, which only report egregious conditions during the first audit. If egregious conditions were seen, action would be taken to get that grower into compliance.
2. Remove only the results column. The visit types would be audit, inspection or blank. This is similar to first option, but would put the explanation of results and how to get detailed results in the narrative at the top of the page.
3. Disconnect the registry from the audits and remove the visit type and results columns completely. SWP would need to talk with growers who have already signed up for the registry that their audits would not be posted. There has been interest from growers to be on the registry without receiving an audit.

Krystal finished her explanation by adding that SWP desires to act and move forward with this quickly.

As this was a special meeting, a motion was needed to open discussion. Hsing-Yi motioned to open discussion. Steve seconded the motion. With no objections, open discussion commenced.

Council Discussion

Sara started the discussion by stating that the SWP registry should align with GAP by only listing farms that pass and excluding farms that do not pass.

Julie asked DATCP staff what specific results will be listed in the results column for option one. Krystal responded that no specific observations or recommendations will be listed.

Hsing-Yi proposed a slow roll-out starting with option three, then option two, then option one. Hsing-Yi also expressed support for Sara’s suggestion to only include farms that have passed the audit.

Krystal reminded that even with option one, almost all results will be listed as ‘No documented observations: details audit/inspections results provided and available through grower’. If egregious conditions were found, which would be rare, DATCP would work with the grower to get them into compliance.

Julie gave support to the ideas, but stated her concerns that the results column would become more detailed over time and requested additional assurance that no specific observations would be listed as this would hurt growers. Krystal responded that there was never a plan to list specific observations on the registry, just overall results. Krystal added that no observations would be listed for now, but could not promise that this would continue over time as the program grows and evolves. Once inspections become routine, observations would start to be recorded during the audit/inspection.

Lavern stated that since participation in the registry is completely voluntary and growers can opt in and opt out year after year, he supports the registry as originally proposed.

Krystal stated that SWP only has authority on non-covered farms if egregious conditions occur. For more minor violations, education and recommendations will be given in the hopes that growers will voluntarily

comply. Lavern added that since the audit and registry are voluntary, the growers involved will want to comply. Growers on the registry will be committed to providing safe food to consumers.

Steve asked for clarification about how often audits could be requested and expected by growers. Could they be received annually? Krystal responded that SWP has limited resources and audits cannot be expected annually. This timeline could narrow as FDA's inspection frequency changes.

Sara stated that the main focus for DATCP should be helping growers get compliant with the Produce Safety Rule. The idea to provide support for non-covered farms was a small request by the council, and the council/SWP may be getting stuck on the details of a less important project. As the design of this registry is DATCP's choice, then GAP and Primus reporting standards should be followed as those programs have been successful and accepted broadly.

Julie made a motion to move forward with option one, with the example wording provided. No other observations or recommendations would be listed in the registry at this time. If there is a need to change the registry for any reason, DATCP will revisit proposed registry changes with the Produce Safety Advisory Board. Lavern seconded the motion. With none opposed, option one carries.

Adjourn

Steve motioned and Lavern seconded the motioned to adjourn. With none opposed the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 10:40.