

State Updates- Discussion of challenges/success with PSR enforcement

- Have you observed disconnects between training and on-farm practices? Are there gaps or disconnects between: training, implementation, and/or prioritization?
- What risk/issue is most observed on inspections in your state?
- Share your most observed positive industry change or best positive interaction with a grower.

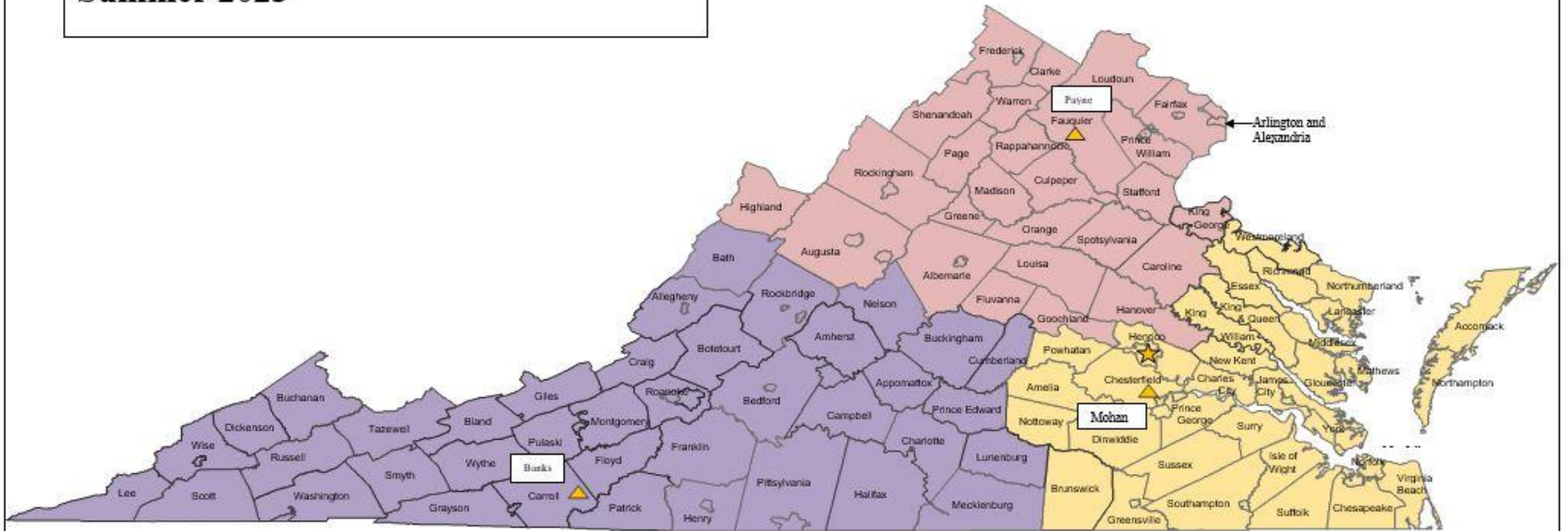
Virginia State Updates



*VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES*

PRODUCE SAFETY PROGRAM

VDACS Produce Safety Territory Map Summer 2023



Education and Training

- Virginia Tech/VCE has partnered with VDACS to provide Produce Safety Alliance courses
- Currently, the course is offered through VCE for \$35 per person.
- Courses without grant funding \$150-200 per person
- Offer via Zoom or self-paced.
- **NEXT COURSE OFFERING: March 6th and 7th 2024**
- Contact: Dr. Laura Strawn, Virginia Tech at Lstrawn@vt.edu for more information



**PRODUCE SAFETY ALLIANCE
GROWER TRAINING**

VIRTUAL

**COST:
\$35***
INCLUDES SHIPPING AND ALL COURSE MATERIALS

OVERVIEW

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule is the first federally regulated standard for growing, harvesting, packing, and holding fresh produce in an effort to reduce microbial contamination and foodborne illness outbreaks.

If you grow fruits or vegetables, attend a training for information about best practices, and regulatory requirements.

WHEN

March 6th, 2024
from 1-5 pm EST &
March 7th, 2024
from 1-5 pm EST

* must attend both half-days of instruction for certificate

* \$35 dollars for VA & TN and \$100 for all other states

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Produce operations wanting to learn more about the FSMA Produce Safety Rule

Produce operations needing to satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule training requirement for inspections

**REGISTER AT:
HERE**

**QUESTIONS?
EMAIL: LSTRAWN@VT.EDU**

SAVE THE DATE

March 26, 2024



Location: VA Farm Bureau building, 12580 West Creek Parkway, Richmond, VA 23238 (main auditorium)

Time: 9:00am to 4:30pm

Cost: \$25 (includes lunch on site)

Register before 3/21 at:

<https://register.ext.vt.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=2901172>

Cleaning and Sanitizing Workshop

The Cleaning and Sanitizing Workshop covers best practices of cleaning and sanitizing within the context of the Produce Safety rule, with perspectives from industry, cooperative extension, and regulatory agencies. It includes an overview on the Produce Safety rule and draft guidance to understand the current regulatory framework and requirements associated with cleaning and sanitizing for covered produce on covered farms.



Topics Covered:

- Food Safety Basics
- Cleaning
- Sanitizing
- Produce Safety Rule Overview
- Identification and Evaluation of Potential Hazards
- Establishing a Cleaning and Sanitizing Program

VDACS, VCE, FDA and the VA Farm Bureau are pleased to offer a new Cleaning and Sanitizing Workshop to Virginia produce growers! This workshop will help growers gain a greater understanding of cleaning and sanitation practices that can be implemented on and around the farm to meet, and potentially exceed, the requirements of the Produce Safety Rule. While the primary focus is under Subpart L: Equipment, Tools, Buildings, and Sanitation (112.121-112.140), Subpart K: Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding Activities (112.111-116) and Subpart A: General Provisions (including 112.3) will be reviewed.

This workshop is designed to be interactive using presentations that encourage discussions, scenario-based small group breakouts, hands-on activities, and in-person demonstrations. The workshop is structured to accommodate regional considerations within the content.



**U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION**

Inspections



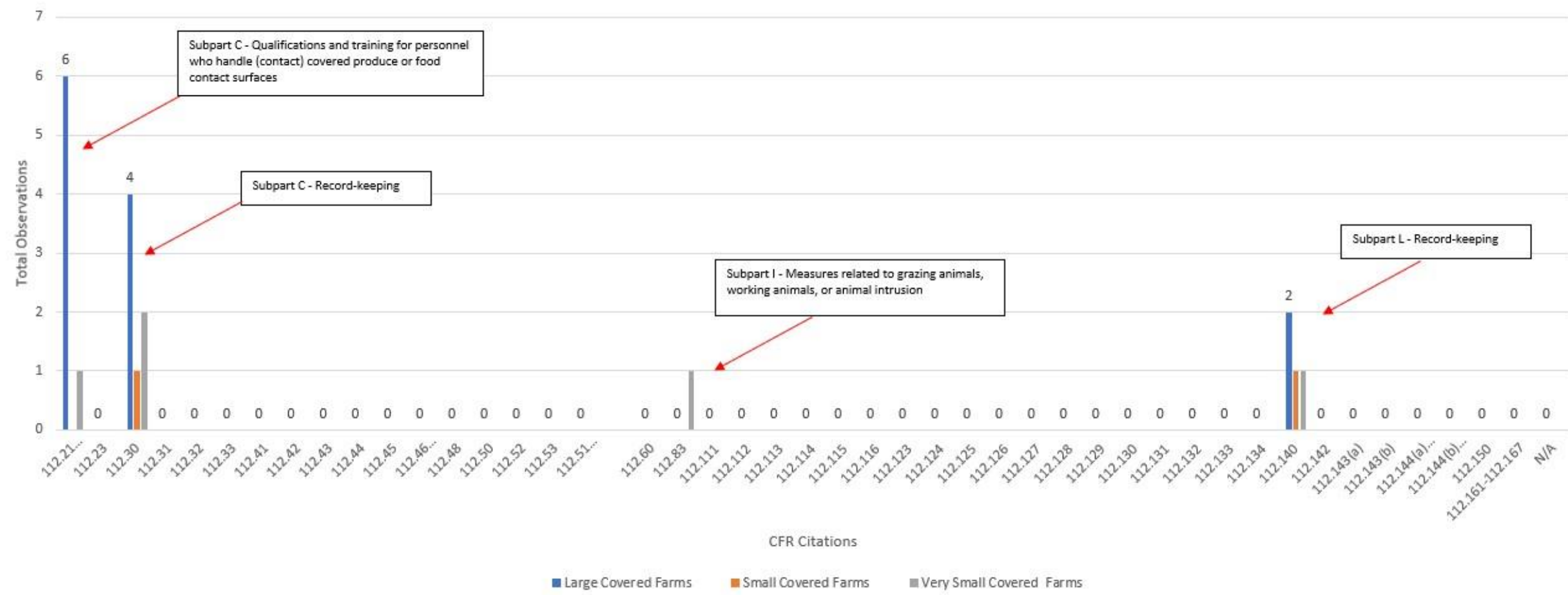
- A total of 114 inspections were completed in FY23.
- To date, only 1 farm was observed with egregious conditions or serious violations.
 - That farm received a letter of warning and a follow-up inspection 30 days later determined that the issue had been corrected.

Top 3 observations (mostly technical demerits):

- **Record keeping (not being done, not being reviewed by supervisor, not in proper format § 112.161)**
- **Pest control in buildings (not being done or not adequate § 112.128)**
- **Inadequate or lack of training (management, PSA, and employee training § 112.21, 112.22)**

FY23 Inspection Data

114 total inspections completed
 52 large farms
 29 small farms
 33 very small farms



Does Your Farm Grow Fruits and Vegetables?

Register Your Farm with the Produce Safety Program

Visit ProduceSafety.VDACS.Virginia.gov to Register!



Register your farm with the VDACS Produce Safety Program

All farms within Virginia that grow, harvest, pack or hold produce intended for human consumption and for sale will need to register their business with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) Produce Safety Program.

Register Here
ProduceSafety.VDACS.Virginia.gov

- Create a free, secure account and register your farm.
- Update data elements currently on file with VDACS by annually verifying your farm.
- Print out a registration certificate to use to help market your products locally.
- Get enrolled automatically in the new VA Grown marketing program.
- Apply for an exemption if eligible.
- Receive up-to-date information about the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Produce Safety Rule, new water requirements, educational and training resources, periodic newsletters and guidance.

Learn more about the FDA Produce Safety Rule
www.VAProduceSafety.com



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- ▶ Farm registration information shared with the VA Grown Program (monthly)
 - ▶ Mutually benefits both the regulatory and marketing/promotion functions of the agency.
- ▶ Certificates can be used by all produce farmers to gain entry into:
 - ▶ Retail markets
 - ▶ Farmers' markets
 - ▶ Food service establishments
- ▶ Registration and Exemption portal update:
 - ▶ 161 registered farms
 - ▶ 88 are totally brand new and previously not on file
 - ▶ 34 of those are new and covered under the PSR
- ▶ The second aspect of the portal is an exemption application.
 - ▶ Produce farms able to apply for one of several exemptions that are available under the FDA Produce Safety Rule.
 - ▶ The portal does not force someone to register before applying for an exemption so the numbers do not correlate to the above numbers - meaning farms can just go to the exemption page.
 - ▶ 152 exemptions issued
 - ▶ Exemption certificates issued by the system and are valid for a period of one year before the farmer will have to log back in to reapply for an exemption.

- 7/12/23 – participated with VA RRT in DEUF water sampling exercise
 - AAR listed many issues and shortcomings we need to address before collecting official DEUF
- 1/10/24 – started participation in the PRPS as a pilot state

Two vacant positions

- RRT Coordinator – closes March 4
- NOVA Produce Specialist – closes Feb 26





VaProduceSafety.com

