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# Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative Operations Committee

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Teleconference  
July 21, 2010



Produce GAPs  
Harmonization Initiative



United Fresh  
PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

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# Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative Operations Committee

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**Welcome and Introductions**

**Dave Corsi**

**Vice President, Wegmans**



**Produce GAPs  
Harmonization Initiative**

**United Fresh**  
PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

# Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions
- Background: Why We're Here
- Operations Committee Discussion
- Summary of Discussion, Next Steps
- Adjourn



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# Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative - Why We're Here

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**David Gombas**

**United Fresh Produce Association**



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# Process to Harmonization

Identified a small but influential Steering Committee of major industry representatives with the ability to drive broad industry acceptance of common standards:

McDonald's

Yum Brands

Pro\*Act

U.S. Foodservice

Darden

Jack in the Box

Sysco

Subway

Markon

River Ranch

Del Monte Fresh

Wegmans

Ahold

Kroger

H.E.B.

Safeway

Schnucks

Publix

Walmart

Food Lion

Supervalu

Costco

Loblaws

Chiquita Fresh

Sun World International

DiMare Company

Green Giant Fresh

Sunkist Growers

Castellini Co.

McEntire Produce

Dole Food Company

Tanimura & Antle

The Giumarra Companies

C.H. Robinson

14 produce associations



# ***Vision of Harmonization***

Develop a harmonized food safety standard and checklist for GAP audits, and globally-acceptable auditing process, necessary to protect consumers from potential hazards that may contaminate produce at that stage of the supply chain, and that will build efficiencies into the supplier audit process.

**One audit by any credible third party,  
acceptable to all buyers**



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# Scope of work (1)

## A single, generic checklist for GAP audits:

- Focused on food safety practices of pre-farm gate produce operations (as defined by the scope of the FDA GAPs);
- With clearly defined requirements that minimize opportunity for misunderstanding, misinterpretation and “standards creep” by operations and auditors;
- Requirements that are risk-based, science-based, attainable, auditable and verifiable;



## Scope of work (2)

### A single, generic checklist for GAP audits:

- Considering all microbiological, chemical and physical hazards reasonably likely to occur, consistent with potential hazards addressed in FDA regulatory guidances;
- Scalable to all size fresh produce operations;
- Considerate of regional- and commodity-specific food safety needs;
- Sufficiently non-prescriptive to be accepting of equivalent food safety practices;



# Scope of work (3)

## A single, generic checklist for GAP audits:

- Flexible to adapt as science reveals better practices and limits;
- Acceptable to a critical mass of customers requiring general produce food safety audits;
- Globally recognized, but specifically applicable to North America operations;
- Freely accessible by everyone, including any 1st, 2nd or 3rd party auditor.



# Technical Working Group

- Much larger, unrestricted group, representing:
  - customers, suppliers, government, audit companies, association staffs;
  - a broad scope of fresh produce commodities;
  - a broad scope of operation sizes; and
  - a broad scope of producing regions, including Mexico and Canada.
- Open invitation to all stakeholders
  - Over 100 signed up, participating as they can
  - Continuously solicited participation



# Eight TWG Meetings to Date

- Monthly 2-day meetings since November
- Broad scope of hosts: McDonalds, Weslaco Research and Extension Center, Taco Bell, Darden, US Foodservice, Sysco, California Strawberry Commission
- Broad range of locations: Herndon VA, Oak Brook IL, Weslaco TX, Irvine CA, Orlando FL, Rosemont IL, Houston TX, San Jose CA, [Philadelphia PA]



# TWGW Participation

- Broad spectrum of the produce industry: leafy greens, tree crops, tomato, melons, mushrooms, berries, potatoes
- Large and small growers, fresh-cut processors, foodservice, retail, government (FDA, USDA, States), standard owners and audit organizations
- 30-70 participants each meeting



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# Process of Harmonization

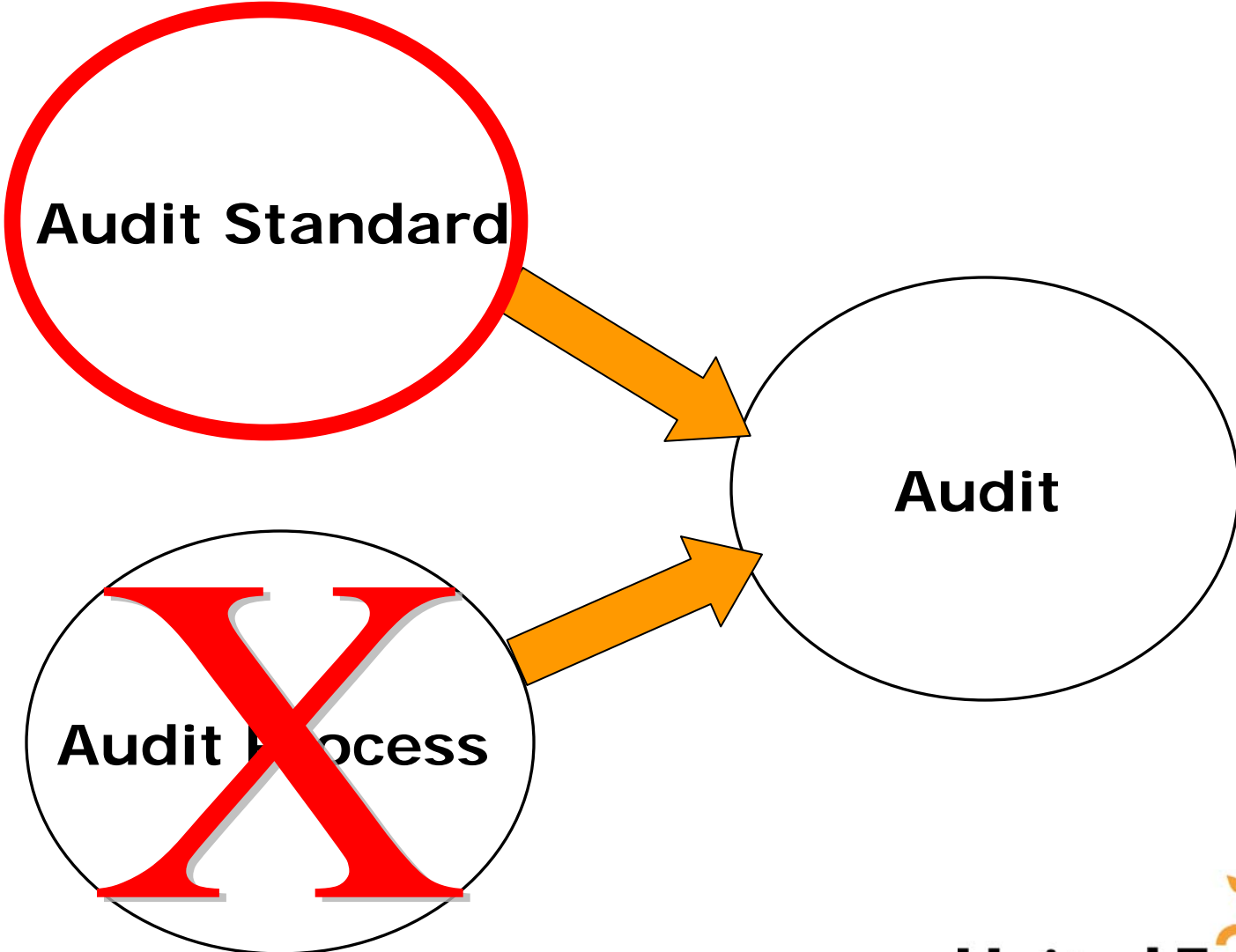
- Identified commonly accepted GAP audit standards, open invitation to the standard owners, 13 standards included
- Identified 60 common audit categories; harmonized by selecting common, complete wordings
- First draft Harmonized Standard completed over 5 meetings
- Now revisiting wording, format for clarity, completeness, ease of use
- Completed draft to be ready September 13



# Standards Received from

- CA LGMA
- Mushroom GAPs
- SENASICA
- Silliker
- USDA
- Tomato Food Safety Audit Protocol
- Community Alliance with Family Farmers
- California Strawberry Commission
- AFDO Model Code
- AIB
- CanadaGAP
- GlobalGAP
- SQF 1000





# Next Phase Challenges

- Identifying who “owns” the standard
- Making the standard freely available for its intended use, while assuring it is financially sustainable
- Managing how the standard is used by audit organizations
- Auditor training and calibration
- Process to resolve disputes on interpretation of the standard
- Process to update, adjust the standard as needed
- Process to accept audits using the standard
- Build recognition, use of the standard

“Globally recognized”



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# Discussion of Operations Committee Role, Scope and Objectives

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**Dave Corsi and All**



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# Discussion Notes (1)

- Copyright? Ownership (ANSI, UFPA, other)?
- ANSI recognition of standard?
- Sufficient global input to the standard to be “global”?
- Are there sufficient linkages with post-farm gate standards to avoid food safety gaps?
- How will auditor training, competency, certification be achieved? Through existing audit organizations, or is a separate, centralized process needed?



# Discussion Notes (2)

- Audit process? “Most difficult part” For GFSI, must be defined.
- Blend standard with existing GFSI-benchmarked process? Is standard compliant with existing GFSI requirements?
- Gaining buyers’ acceptance of the standard will be a separate goal from GFSI acceptance.



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# Operations Committee Next Steps

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**August 24, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm**  
**Philadelphia Airport Marriott**  
**(hosted by PMA)**



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