

FOOD SAFETY

State departments of agriculture are the frontline in protecting consumers against foodborne illness and food contamination. To support the FDA's statutory authority, state agencies are primarily responsible for the actual inspections, enforcement, training and implementation of various other food safety regulatory activities. In fact, approximately 80 percent of all food safety inspections in the United States are completed at the state and local levels. Cooperation between federal and state entities is crucial for the effective implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act.



BACKGROUND

FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT IMPLEMENTATION

In 2011, the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) was signed into law, marking a pivotal moment in our nation's commitment to fundamentally enhance and transform our food safety system from reactive (recalls and trace back) to preventive (education and evaluation). State departments of agriculture and other state agencies are charged with implementing significant portions of FSMA, notably:

- [Produce Safety Rule](#) (including special provisions for sprout production)
- [Preventive Controls for Human Food](#)
- [Preventive Controls for Animal Food](#)

Currently, 46 states and one territory have entered into cooperative agreements with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to educate and/or regulate farms subject to the Produce Safety Rule. NASDA's Foundation supports all these states and works jointly with the FDA to guide states in the implementation of best practices. A similar framework for animal food safety is available. Through proactive measures, education, and collaborative partnerships, the FSMA implementation is instrumental in ensuring the well-being of consumers and the integrity of the U.S. food system and supply chain.

One of NASDA's guiding principles for FSMA compliance for farms is to "educate before and while you regulate" has been integrated into state inspection compliance programs. Also, a team of state, FDA, and cooperative extension food safety leaders led by the NASDA Foundation developed an On Farm Readiness Review program. This review program is meant to foster a dialogue between the farmer and the regulator and/or educator about the requirements of the PSR. It is confidential and non-regulatory, stressing prevention practices. Learn more and find out how to sign-up for an On Farm Readiness Review at the NASDA Foundation's [website](#).



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NEW ERA FOR FOOD SAFETY

In 2020, the FDA introduced an updated food safety blueprint, titled the “New Era for Food Safety,” which outlines ambitious new goals, including enhancing traceability, improving rapid response to outbreaks, and reducing food contamination. This initiative leverages the strategic utilization of technology and other tools to establish a safer and traceable food system. It also ushers in the “new era” of prevention as the goal for regulatory programs, including outreach and education.



NASDA POLICY

As a co-regulator, NASDA remains dedicated to four core priorities to meet consumer expectations for a safe, nutritious, and affordable food supply, while simultaneously promoting competition and increasing production.

1. Ensure fair and equitable implementation across states of FSMA for American farmers.
2. Promote the implementation of regulations in a manner that emphasizes education and outreach, with a focus on prevention.
3. Ensure the consistent application of prevention rules in both domestic and foreign production.
4. Continue to seek workable rules and guidance to assist farmers in preventing foodborne illnesses from fresh fruits and vegetable (e.g. definition of farm, use of composed materials of animal origin, use of agricultural water).

NASDA'S ASKS

NASDA supports increased funding for the following FSMA programs:

- Produce Safety Rule Implementation through the State Cooperative Agreement Program
- Animal Food Preventive Controls Rule Implementation
- Food Safety Outreach/Education Programs led by states
 - Including the Produce Safety Alliance, administered by Cornell University
- Produce Safety State Programs funding for states
- \$170 million for food safety state programs in FY25.

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