



# "A Grower's Perspective on the Harmonized Experience"

2013 Empire State Producers Expo  
January 23, 2013

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# Topics of Presentation

- Who is Dawson's Orchards
- Why a Food Safety Program and Certification Process is important to Dawson's Orchards
- Why we went with GAP Harmonize for our certification
- GAP Harmonize background information
- GAP and GAP Harmonize Comparison Examples
- Specific Dawson's Orchards examples of written documents and forms
- Summary of Key Points and Recommendations
- Thank you and Questions



# Who is Dawson's Orchards?

- A 2nd generation 46 acre certified GAP Harmonized fruit farm located in western PA.
- Focused on apple production - growing 14 varieties; packing on-site; and servicing the local wholesale and retail consumer markets in a 150 mile radius with our 6 delivery trucks.
- Additional PA and regional NY/MI apples are used to supplement our growing local and non-local orientated consumer needs.
- Peaches, pears, plums, blueberries, black and red raspberries are also grown for home, CSA and local farm markets





# Dawson's Orchards, Inc is Located at:

122 Petersburg Rd, Enon Valley, PA 16120





# Dawson's Orchards Key Personnel

- **Carolyn McQuiston - Owner**  
800-EAT-APPL (800-328-2775)  
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- **Scott McQuiston-Vice Pres & Food Safety**  
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- **Jim Smith - Sales**  
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- **Karen Druschel - Marketing / Advertising**  
karen@dawsonsorcharnds.com

# Why a Food Safety Program & Certification Process is Important to Dawson's Orchards

- Originally local grocery chain "suggested" that suppliers start moving in the direction of certification.
- We feel that it is just the right thing to do & the process holds you accountable for maintaining it.
- GAP certified since 2007 & GAP Harmonized in 2012.
- Almost daily food recalls in The Packer Daily. Then Jensen and Chamberlain Farms involving not just recalls but deaths.
- Knowing the FSMA was coming and now has been issued on 1/4/13.
- Past experience - nothing ever backs off but rather always increases especially when others are demanding what someone else is required to do.



# How do you decide which certification?



# Settling in on *GAP* Harmonize

- Previously *GAP* certified due in large part with info from Cornell.
- Walmart requiring *GFSI* type cert but not sure if we'd have a crop this past year.
- Originally suggested by Brenda Shaeffer at PA Dept of Ag.
- Liked the format and the concept of the industry trying to establish one standard.
- Unfortunately decided in end of June'12 for a Aug'12 audit.
- Found out that Walmart would accept *GAP* Harmonized provided that it included the *Global Market Addendums*.
- After certified - attended "Train the Trainer Workshop" put on by United Fresh and the USDA (wish I had before cert!!).



# Key Points about GAP Harmonize that I learned about and why I hope that the industry supports it

- My background lived through the pain of many standards to choose from and how life was simpler with one standard. Not necessarily easy but simpler.
- **The 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 in the supplier audit process."
- **ie:** One audit by any 3<sup>rd</sup> party acceptable to all buyers.
- Process was logical. Before starting influential leaders of the producing and buying side agreed to accept this one standard concept.
- Then a Tech Working Group of 150 studied 13 commonly accepted standards, identified 60 common categories and worked at wording, clarity, completeness and ease of use.

## Key Points about GAP Harmonize that I learned about and why I hope that the industry supports it - cont

- There is an on-going Calibration Committee who meets to interpret & makes rulings on how to apply the standard
- While this is not GFSI, they worked to make it meet its guidance to the extent practical. Where the major difference lies is that the US emphasizes prevention measures of bacterial concerns whereas the European traditionally are stronger on pesticide control.
- Need to communicate with your buyers. A lot of major food chains signed on at the beginning and show as accepting the GAP Harmonize in lieu of any of the GFSI stds but they reserve the right to add buyer-specific riders. Ie Walmart & Global Mkt Add.
- Listing of auditors and produce buying companies that are accepting GAP Harmonize certs

# Where we are now...

These audit organizations, and others, are using or plan to use the Harmonized Standards for GAP audits. Please click on the logos below for more information.



Audit organizations listed are for identification purposes only. The United Fresh Produce Association and the Produce GAPs Harmonization Initiative do not endorse or warrant the services of any particular entity.





# Where we are now...

These produce-buying companies, and more, endorse\* audits using the Harmonized Standards



\*some conditions may apply; please check with your customer/buyer





# If you're GAP certified - this is the summary that you're use to

United States Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Marketing Services  
Fresh Products Branch

## Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices Audit Verification Program Scoresheet

www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp

Facility Name (Print) as it should appear on Certificate: 0			
Street Address (Print): 0	City (Print): 0	State (Print): 0	Zip (Print): 0
e-mail Address (Print): 0	fax number: -	Date Audit Requested:	Date of Previous Audit :
Date Audit Began: 1/0/1900	Date Audit Completed: 1/0/1900	USDA Commodity Procurement Audit? Check One Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Time Audit Began: 12:00 AM	Time Audit Completed: 12:00 AM		

### EVALUATION ELEMENTS

Scopes Requested	Element	Possible Points	Less N/A Points	Adjusted Points	Passing Score*	Facility Score	Pass Fail	Date Passed	General Questions	Reviewing Official	Un-announced
X	General Questions	180	0	180	144	0					
	Part 1 – Farm Review	190	0	190	152	0					
	Part 2 – Field Harvesting & Field Packing Activities	185	0	185	148	0					
	Part 3 – House Packing Facility	290	0	290	232	0					
	Part 4 – Storage and Transportation	255	0	255	204	0					
	Part 6 – Wholesale Distribution Center/ Warehouses	410	0	410	328	0					
	Part 7 – Preventative Food Defense Procedures	180	0	180	144	0					

\*A Passing Score is 80% of the Possible Points or the Adjusted Points, if adjustment are necessary, with no "automatic unsatisfactory" conditions is required for certification.

Commodities Reviewed (Print):	Commodity:									
	Acres:									

Send completed GAP&GHP Certificate to: (choose one) \_\_\_\_\_ Inspection office: (list office) \_\_\_\_\_ Directly to auditee above: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Auditor Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Duty Station: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Facility Representative signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ All Scopes Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, the facility representative agrees to have company information posted to the USDA website. A company will only be listed on the USDA website if all scopes audited receive a passing score.

For USDA HQ use:

Reviewing Official Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Certificate Mailed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Posted to USDA Website: \_\_\_\_\_

# GAP Harmonized Field Operations & Harvesting USDA Checklist

Audit Summary		Name of Auditee:					0
		Date of audit:					1/0/1900
Section	Questions	Total # in Section	# of C	#of CAN	# of IAR	# of NA	Question # of any CAN or IAR
<b>1.0</b>	<b>General Questions</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
1.1	Management Responsibility	3	1	0	0	0	
1.2	Food Safety Plan	2	0	0	0	0	
1.3	Documentation & Recordkeeping	3	0	0	0	0	
1.4	Worker Education & Training	2	0	0	0	0	
1.5	Microbiological Sampling & Testing	4	0	0	0	0	
1.6	Traceability	2	0	0	0	0	
1.7	Recall Program	1	0	0	0	0	
1.8	Corrective Actions	1	0	0	0	0	
1.9	Self Audits	1	0	0	0	0	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Field Production</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
2.1	Field History & Assessment	2	0	0	0	0	
2.2	Worker Health/Hygiene and Toilet/Handwashing Facilities	21	0	0	0	0	
2.3	Agricultural Chemicals/Plant Protection Products	4	0	0	0	0	
2.4	Agricultural Water	7	0	0	0	0	
2.5	Animal Control	3	0	0	0	0	
2.6	Soil Amendments	2	0	0	0	0	
2.7	Vehicles, Equipment, Tools and Utensils	6	0	0	0	0	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Harvesting</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
3.1	Pre-harvest Assessment	1	0	0	0	0	
3.2	Water/Ice	5	0	0	0	0	
3.3	Containers, Bins and Packaging Materials	4	0	0	0	0	
3.4	Field Packaging and Handling	7	0	0	0	0	
3.5	Postharvest Handling	3	0	0	0	0	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Transportation (Field to Packinghouse)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
4.1	Equipment Sanitation & Maintenance	3	0	0	0	0	

# GAP Harmonized Post Harvest USDA Checklist

Audit Summary		Name of Auditee:					0
		Date of audit:					1/0/1900
Section	Questions	Total # in Section	# of C	#of CAN	# of IAR	# of NA	Q # of any CAN or IAR
<b>1.0</b>	<b>General Questions</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
1.1	Management Responsibility	3	0	0	0	0	
1.2	Food Safety Plan or Risk Assesment	2	0	0	0	0	
1.3	Raw Material Sourcing	2	0	0	0	0	
1.4	Documentation & Recordkeeping	3	0	0	0	0	
1.5	Worker Education & Training	2	0	0	0	0	
1.6	Traceability	2	0	0	0	0	
1.7	Recall Program	1	0	0	0	0	
1.8	Corrective Actions	1	0	0	0	0	
1.9	Self Audits	1	0	0	0	0	
1.10	Water/Ice	9	0	0	0	0	
1.11	Containers, Bins	6	0	0	0	0	
1.12	Facility, Equipment, Tools	11	0	0	0	0	
1.13	Non-product Material Storage	4	0	0	0	0	
1.14	Waste Material	1	0	0	0	0	
1.15	Outside Grounds	1	0	0	0	0	
1.16	Glass Control	1	0	0	0	0	
1.17	Leaks/Lubricants	1	0	0	0	0	
1.18	Equipment and Utensil Construction	3	0	0	0	0	
1.19	Temporary Repairs	1	0	0	0	0	
1.20	Worker Health/Hygiene and Toilet/Handwashing Facilities	19	0	0	0	0	
1.21	Temperature Control	1	0	0	0	0	
1.22	Packing and Handling	2	0	0	0	0	
1.23	Pest and Animal Control	3	0	0	0	0	
1.24	Microbiological Sampling/Testing	4	0	0	0	0	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Packinghouse</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Transportation (Packinghouse to Customer)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>3.0</b>							
3.1	Temperature Control	4	0	0	0	0	
3.2	Equipment Sanitation and Maintenance	3	0	0	0	0	

# How are GAP Harmonized Items Judged?

- Four possible judgments to each standard item:
  - **Compliant (C)** - Operation fully meets the expectations.
  - **Corrective Action Needed (CAN)** - Does not fully meet expectations but no immediate food safety threat.
  - **Immediate Action Required (IAR)** - Non-compliance is an immediate threat to food safety. Must be corrected to pass and affected product may need to be evaluated for recall.
  - **Not Applicable (NA)** - Is not a concern for this operation.



# GAP Harmonize Acceptance

- No questions can be an "IAR".
- No falsification of records.
- Certain listed questions must be compliant.
- Each major section must have 80% compliant to questions which are not answered as "NA".
- If a major section has less than 5 questions, one "CAN" can be assessed and still meet the min acceptance criteria.

# GAP Harmonize does:

- **Require more!**
  - Not going to lie but my bet is that 75% of the extra details over *GAP* are things that you're already doing but may not have it documented either in writing or with a form.
  - Time - both in developing your plan and maintaining it. But after developed, that's done and maintaining can be minimized if organized.
- **Makes you think about your operation and food safety more than *GAP*.**
  - More pre assessments and advanced planning "what-ifs" if something does go wrong.
- **Provide more documentation of what is required.**
  - Beyond the score sheet, they provide a checklist for each question detailing the requirement, procedures expected, how verification is expected and what corrective action would be required if not compliant.
  - Remember this is like an open book test given in advanced which allows you to copy directly what they have written into your plan. IE When in doubt - copy.

Direct comparison between *GAP* and *GAP Harmonize* using Water Requirements starting with the *GAP* score sheet then going to the *GAP Harmonize* score sheet and finishing with the *GAP Harmonize* checklist.

**GAP - Water  
Section**

**Part 1 - Farm Review  
Water Usage**

**(1-1) What is the source of irrigation water? (Pond, Stream, Well, Municipal, Other)**

**Please specify:**

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**(1-2) How are crops irrigated? (Flood, Drip, Sprinkler, Other) Please specify:**

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Questions		Points	Yes	NO	N/A	Doc
1-3	A water quality assessment has been performed to determine the quality of water used for irrigation purpose on the crop(s) being applied.	15				D
1-4	A water quality assessment has been performed to determine the quality of water use for chemical application or fertigation method.	15				D
1-5	If necessary, steps are taken to protect irrigation water from potential direct and non-point source contamination.	15				



# GAP Harmonized - Water Section

Q #	Requirement	DOC	C	CAN	IAR	NA	Auditor Comments
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Agricultural Water</b>						
<b>2.4.1</b>	<b>Water System Description</b>						
2.4.1.1	A water system description shall be available for review.						
2.4.1.2	The water source shall be in compliance with prevailing regulations.						
2.4.1.3	Agricultural water systems shall not be cross-connected with human or animal waste systems.						
<b>2.4.2</b>	<b>Water System Risk Assessment</b>						
2.4.2.1	An initial risk assessment shall be performed and documented that takes into consideration the historical testing results of the water source, the characteristics of the crop, the stage of the crop, and the method of application.	<b>R</b>					
<b>2.4.3</b>	<b>Water Management Plan</b>						
2.4.3.1	There shall be a water management plan to mitigate risks associated with the water system on an ongoing basis.	<b>WP</b>					
2.4.3.2	Water testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or prevailing regulations for the commodities being grown.	<b>WP</b>					
2.4.3.3	The testing program shall be implemented consistent with the water management plan.	<b>R</b>					

# GAP Harmonized - Water Description of Requirements

Field Operations and Harvesting Harmonized Food Safety Standard Version 07/22/2011

	Requirement	Procedure	Verification	Corrective Action
<b>2.4.</b>	<b>Agricultural Water</b>			
<b>2.4.1.</b>	<b>Water System Description</b>			
<b>2.4.1.1.</b>	A water system description shall be available for review.	Water sources and the production blocks they may serve shall be documented and current. The description shall include one or more of the following: maps, photographs, drawings (hand drawings are acceptable) or other means to communicate the location of water source(s), permanent fixtures and the flow of the water system (including holding systems, reservoirs or any water captured for re-use). Permanent fixtures include wells, gates, reservoirs, valves, returns and other above ground features that make up a complete irrigation system shall be documented in such a manner as to enable location in the field.	Auditor reviews water system description or map, and verifies accuracy during field inspection.	Operation develops or corrects the water system description or map.
<b>2.4.1.2.</b>	The water source shall be in compliance with prevailing regulations.	Agricultural water shall be sourced from a location and in a manner that is compliant with prevailing regulations.	Auditor determines whether the water source is compliant with regulations relevant for the intended use of the water.	Operation discontinues use of the source until compliant with regulations. Affected produce is evaluated for potential contamination and disposition.
<b>2.4.1.3.</b>	Agricultural water systems shall not be cross-connected with human or animal waste systems.	Water systems intended to convey untreated human or animal waste shall be separated from conveyances utilized to deliver agricultural water.	Auditor reviews water system for cross-connections with human or animal waste conveyances.	Operation discontinues use of the system until they are separated.

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Verification</b>	<b>Corrective Action</b>
<b>2.4.2.</b>	<b>Water System Risk Assessment</b>			
<b>2.4.2.1.</b>	An initial risk assessment shall be performed and documented that takes into consideration the historical testing results of the water source, the characteristics of the crop, the stage of the crop, and the method of application.	A review or new assessment shall be conducted seasonally and any time there is a change made to the system or a situation occurs that could introduce an opportunity to contaminate the system. The risk assessment shall address potential physical, chemical, and biological hazards and hazard control procedures for the water distribution system.	Auditor reviews the risk assessment for completeness of consideration of potential hazards.	Operation develops or updates the risk assessment.

	Requirement	Procedure	Verification	Corrective Action
<b>2.4.3.</b>	<b>Water Management Plan</b>			
<b>2.4.3.1.</b>	There shall be a water management plan to mitigate risks associated with the water system on an ongoing basis.	The water management plan shall include the following: preventive controls, monitoring and verification procedures, corrective actions, and documentation. The plan shall be reviewed following any changes made to the water system risk assessment and adjusted accordingly to incorporate such changes. Training and/or retraining of personnel having oversight or performance duties shall be documented.	Auditor reviews the water management plan for accuracy and completeness relative to the risk assessment.	Operation develops or updates the water management plan.
<b>2.4.3.2.</b>	Water testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or prevailing regulations for the commodities being grown.	As required, there shall be a written procedure for water testing during the production and harvest season, which includes frequency of sampling, who is taking the samples, where sample is taken, how the sample is collected, type of test and acceptance criteria. If all agricultural water is sourced from a municipal source, the municipal testing shall suffice. The frequency of testing and point of water sampling shall be determined based on the risk assessment and current industry standards for commodities being produced.	Auditor verifies that a water testing program is in compliance with the risk assessment and current industry standards and is included in the water management plan.	Operation develops a testing program consistent with risks identified in the risk assessment and with current industry standards for the commodities being produced.
<b>2.4.3.3.</b>	The testing program shall be implemented consistent with the water management plan.	Testing shall be performed and documented according to procedures described in the water management plan.	Auditor reviews testing records for compliance with the written plan.	Operation shall revise testing to be in compliance with the written plan. The corrective actions noted in the water management plan shall be followed until the conditions have been mitigated and the non-conformity has been resolved.

# Specific examples of Dawson's Orchards, Inc written documents and forms



# Summary of Key Points and Recommendations If you feel that GAP Harmonize is Right for your situation

- Start now! Trust me July is NOT the time to do it.
- Buy into it.
- While it may entail a little more work - review other standards like PrimusGFS as they have additional points you may want to include.
- Put the time in during the development to organize both the plan and forms. It will be a time saver during the daily maintenance.
- Document your procedures even if not required. Good training tool for new employees and auditor doesn't have to question if a point is covered. Remember OK to copy from checklist to your doc.
- Organize the plan into sections.
- Create forms which have column headings that allow easy check-offs and organized into notebooks that are daily, weekly and monthly tasks.



- Collaborate if possible. Some co-ops write a basic plan and members make minor modifications as it pertains to them.
- Educate yourself to what IS safe food practices and don't just assume that you've done it this way for years without any incident. Remember Jensen probably thought the same.

*Above all - write what you do and do what you write.*

I'd like to thank the following people for various aspects of our journey:

- Cornell University for the materials they put out.
- All the organizations and people who put on this Expo.
- Gretchen Wall who got me into this (a real learning experience) & Craig Kahlke who coordinated this segment.
- PA Dept of Ag people like Brenda Scheaffer and Crystal Gottfried.
- T3 Technologies and Pat Trail for making a traceability program that is so easy to use and passes any audit with flying colors.
- My wife who I will admit gets pushed to the limit when we "discuss" what new things are necessary but we always reach a good compromise.
- And finally to you for sitting through my attempt to relate our experience to you.

# Any Questions?