



## PREPARATION FOR NEXT SEASON Off-Season Food Safety Tune-Up

Here are some tips for conducting an Off-Season Tune-Up and planning ideas:

The Arizona LGMA is grounded in the principles of continuous improvement. We sustain this through metrics and audit checklist updates and the cycle of improving our food safety systems through audit findings and corrective actions. An annual review of your Food Safety Plan and corresponding manual is a good idea and is required for some third-party audit schemes such as GFSI. In the LGMA, reviews and updates to food safety plans occur on a regular basis. Utilize this off-season to bring your food safety plan to the next level!

### MY PLAN:

- Review SOPs/SSOPs for edits
- Create and instate new policies/procedures
- Develop a training plan to communicate changes or updates
- Set personal training goals

- Use your audit findings to improve communications and manage shipper-grower-harvester expectations. Identify changes that are needed prior to next season.

- Review LGMA audit findings for trends. Are there commonalities with metrics sections or specific topics? Do you notice that non-conformances are related to specific contractors, suppliers, or crews, or are the findings related to larger categories such as administrative tasks or human error?

- Take a second look at the corrective actions that were taken in response to audit infractions and deviations. Did you address the root cause to prevent re-occurrence?

- Are you able to make further improvements in your original approach

to solve the issue? Can food safety team members or other employees offer suggestions? It is helpful to get input from those that you expect to implement food safety SOPs and SSOPs. They are the key to carrying out and repeating the food safety procedures daily.

- REVIEW the end of the season audit statistics for the breakdown of the numbers, types of findings, and what categories were identified. Are there areas that you may have had a near miss – or an observation but no finding assigned? What can you learn from other members' deviations?
- Read and re-read the Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Production and Harvest of Lettuce and Leafy Greens. Familiarize yourself with the audit checklist. Familiarity with the metrics and checklist will help you be a prepared auditee.
- Call a friend or mentor. Use your network. What is on their radar for modification?
- TRAIN! Utilize LGMA resources such as the Arizona LGMA Food Safety Training Kit, Metrics 101, and other training programs to better prepare your food safety team.

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If you would like more information on the Arizona LGMA and metrics topics, feel free to contact us.

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