



Montana On-Farm Readiness Review

What is the On-Farm Readiness Review (OFRR)?

The OFRR is a voluntary, free, educational tool for producers to assess their readiness for compliance with the FSMA (Food Safety Modernization Act) Produce Safety Rule (PSR). This non-regulatory, confidential assessment will help you determine whether your produce safety practices meet the requirements of the PSR and prepare you for a produce safety inspection. The review team will conduct the OFRR through discussion and observation of relevant growing harvesting, packing and holding activities.

The OFRR was developed by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and FDA - in collaboration with Cooperative Extension and State Department of Agriculture staff from across the U.S. The OFRR looks and feels like a farm tour and is a cornerstone of effective education and outreach on the FSMA Produce Safety Rule (PSR).

What's involved?

This is an educational site visit and walk-through of your farm practices to help produce growers understand and comply with the Produce Safety Rule

- An OFRR farm visit typically takes one to three hours
- OFRRs should be conducted as close to harvest as possible in order to provide the best assessment of the producer's readiness
- A team of two to five MDA staff make up the review team
- Engagement will be conversational – this is neither an audit nor an inspection
- Prior to the OFRR, reviewers will follow a standardized decision tree to determine which parts of the rule apply to the operation
- At the conclusion of the OFRR, reviewers will highlight both positive aspects of the operation and high-priority areas for improvement for compliance with the PSR

How will an OFRR benefit the farm?

OFRRs help farms identify strengths and weaknesses in their operations relative to the requirements of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule

- You'll have the full attention of folks who know the rule inside and out – now is the time to ask operation-specific questions about the rule
- You'll get a detailed look at which aspects of the rule apply to your operation and you'll be able to determine the areas of risk on your farm that you can improve upon
- No photos or notes will be taken by the review team during the review – the OFRR process is confidential
- The OFRR Review team will refer you to resources and discuss potential follow up technical assistance to help you understand and comply with the rule



How do I request an OFRR on my Farm and how do I prepare for it?

Contact Montana's Produce Safety Program at 406.444.0131 or foodsafety@mt.gov

- We ask that someone in a position of responsibility for food safety participate in the entire OFRR including providing some basic information about your farm to the review team prior to the OFRR so that the visit can be as efficient and useful to your operation as possible
- It is recommended that this same person attend the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training prior to the OFRR
- We encourage you to think through your farm food safety practices as they pertain to the Produce Safety Rule and be prepared to ask any questions you have about how your practices align with the rule

On-Farm Readiness (OFRR) Review Checklist

- Make sure you've taken the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training – these courses are an 8 hour training on the key concepts covered by the Produce Safety Rule. To find an upcoming PSA Grower Training course, check our website [HERE](https://agr.mt.gov/Topics/N-P/Produce-Safety-Pages/Eduction-Pages/Education-and-Outreach) (<https://agr.mt.gov/Topics/N-P/Produce-Safety-Pages/Eduction-Pages/Education-and-Outreach>)
- Complete the online Farm Status Determination form. Completing this form will provide us with some important information about your farm and help determine if you may be eligible for an exemption from the Produce Safety Rule. If you are eligible for an exemption, the form will also allow you to submit your Exemption Application online. You can access this online form [HERE](https://forms.mt.gov/AGR/mda-produce) (<https://forms.mt.gov/AGR/mda-produce>)