

# ROAD TO FOOD SAFETY

1.

**MDA (MO DEPT OF AG) DROVE TO THE AMISH COMMUNITY** to visit with growers at their produce auction to introduce the Produce Safety Rule (Rule). Often growers were found by following buggy tracks.

2.

**MDA TALKED TO AUCTION MANAGER** and introduced the idea of hosting a produce safety **TRAINING** for the community. Auction manager provided information to community members.

4.

**MDA & EXTENSION** demonstrated water sampling procedures and provided **FREE WATER TESTING**.

5.

**ON-FARM READINESS REVIEWS (OFRR)** were conducted with almost every grower in the community.

3.

**SURVEY CARDS** were developed to build a **GROWER INVENTORY** list. MDA found that growers lacked an understanding of record keeping, so **RECORD TEMPLATES** were developed.

An **OUTBREAK** in another community emphasized the importance of food safety.

6.

After completing OFRR's, many growers took it a step further and became **GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP)** certified.

7.

Materials received by the growers included **BROCHURES, CLIPBOARDS, MINI-BOOKS** of the Rule, **FLAGS** for marking no pick zones, and **BUCKETS** with cleaning and sanitizing information.

The community hosted the **ANNUAL MEETING** of produce auctions across the **MIDWEST** and invited MDA to speak and do a demonstration on produce safety.

## A ROAD TO FOOD SAFETY

is being traveled down by the Missouri Department of Agriculture, Produce Safety Program. The roadmap is being defined as we travel muddy roads, cross rivers, follow horse paths, and dodge potholes. Being observant is the key. One of the first paths we found was to the produce auctions. While attending the auctions, we encountered many speedbumps and learning opportunities: How to approach growers? When to give information? Is there a point person at the auction or in the community? How to communicate with growers on their farm? Do growers understand the importance of food safety and how to reduce the risk of an outbreak? These questions and more led us to forks in the road that inspired us to be creative and start filling our toolbox full of outreach materials. Brochures, clipboards, mini-books of the Rule, and online registration were developed but we knew it was just a start. As we visited farms all over the state and answered growers' questions about the

Rule, we realized it was time for a tune up. So, grower inventory cards, OFRR cards, and record templates were created. The latest items added to the toolbox were buckets that outline the steps of proper cleaning and sanitizing as well as flags that can be used to mark areas of animal intrusion. Growers in this community will not be subject to inspections until 2021 but as we continue to hit the road doing outreach, Missouri growers will help us identify additional outreach that is needed to grow produce safely. We will GET OUT OF THE OFFICE knowing the ROAD WILL NEVER END until every farmer adopts a food safety culture!

Adam Mefrakis, Ben Marshall, Ken Struempfler, Bart Hawcroft  
Missouri Department of Agriculture

