

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAPs) FIELD GUIDE



FOR GROWERS & SHELLERS

WHAT ARE GAPs?



GAPs are science-based, voluntary guidelines that reduce the risk of contamination in agricultural products. As APC, we want to provide educational resources to support growers & ensure premium quality American pecans meet consumer demands.

WHY ARE GAPs IMPORTANT?



GAPs are essential in the pecan industry to:

- Enhance food safety
- Meet export & regulatory requirements
- Maintain a consistent, high quality supply chain

KEY GAP COMPONENTS & HOW TO IMPLEMENT

	1 WATER QUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test irrigation water regularly • Protect water sources from livestock or runoff • Manage irrigation systems • Avoid using contaminated water close to harvest
	2 MANURE & MUNICIPAL BIOSOLIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply only properly composted materials • Follow required application intervals before harvest • Prevent direct contact between manure & nuts
	3 WORKER HEALTH & HYGIENE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accessible handwashing stations • Train workers on hygiene & safe handling practices • Enforce policies for illness reporting & exclusion during harvest
	4 FIELD SANITATION – SOIL & ORCHARD FLOOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep orchard floors free of debris & contamination • Manage vegetation effectively • Remove grazing livestock well before harvest • Minimize water to reduce contamination risks
	5 INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor pests, diseases, weeds, & orchard health regularly • Use scouting & thresholds to guide applications • Rotate chemistries & management practices • Apply crop protection products correctly & at proper timing • Promote orchard sanitation & overall tree health
	6 CLEANING & SHELLING FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean & sanitize equipment routinely • Implement pest control programs in facilities • Separate raw & processed product areas to prevent cross-contamination
	7 HARVEST & POST HARVEST HANDLING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use clean, well-maintained equipment • Minimize time nuts remain on the ground • Ensure clean transport & handling • Dry & store under conditions that prevent mold
	8 TRACEABILITY & RECORDKEEPING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain detailed records (fertilizer, pesticide logs) • Ensure products are traceable through supply chain • Document harvest dates & lot identification

THE BOTTOM LINE

Consistent application of GAPs protects food safety, improves product quality, & strengthens market access for pecan growers & shellers.

