

# Audit Shadowing Workshops for Internal Auditors

## Background and Purpose

Early implementation of the USDA GroupGAP (GGAP) program has been successful in expanding the abilities of producers of all sizes to meet the growing demand for food safety certification from the buying community. Through GGAP, producers are collectively leveraging the coordinating capacity of food hubs, support organizations or other business entities to receive the training and technical assistance necessary to successfully complete third party GAP audits.

The public rollout of GGAP is increasing demand for skilled internal auditors. While USDA's required auditor training provides the theoretical background for auditing, opportunities for field-based training are limited. Additional field training for auditors is a necessary step in increasing the efficacy of GGAP auditors and building confidence in the credibility of the GGAP program.

Wallace Center is working to address this limitation by providing **nine audit shadowing workshops** between 2017-2019. During audit shadowing, participating internal auditors will be convened to observe an experienced peer auditor conducting a farm or system audit in order to build the tacit and implicit skills needed for effective auditing.

The long-term goal of this work, in addition to providing professional development opportunities for internal auditors, is to establish **a culture of peer-to-peer training** and technical assistance among the GGAP cadre. We believe that experienced internal auditors are the best possible trainers of less experienced auditors, and hope that by developing this workshop process we can make it easier for cadre members and organization to host additional peer training opportunities in the future.

## Concept

Each audit shadowing workshop will convene 5-10 participants for two days of technical assistance led by a local GGAP internal auditor. We will make some scholarships available to offset the cost of travel and lodging for auditors who would not otherwise be able to participate. Funding will also be provided to the auditor/organization leading the group and an honorarium will be paid to participating producers.

We are proposing a training agenda including one or two separate farm audits (depending on timing, group size, travel distance, and audit complexity), along with a classroom debriefing session to discuss questions and lessons learned. Participants will be able to see the real-world scenarios requiring problem solving and interpretation, creating the opportunity for the lead auditor to field questions and prompting participants for input.

Wallace staff will develop brief reports summarizing the lessons learned during each event and will also collect evaluation data, both of which will be used to refine and improve the learning experience at future workshops. Each summary will be shared with the GGAP Community of Practice, and questions and conversations elevated by each proceeding document will stimulate further discussion.

## 2017 Audit Shadowing Workshop Schedule

### ALBA Organics - Salinas, CA

Wednesday, May 17 – Thursday May 18

Lead Auditor: Cathy Carlson, Carlson Food Safety Consulting

Scope: USDA Harmonized GAP

### Chesapeake Harvest – Rising Sun, MD

Monday, June 5 – Tuesday, June 6

Lead Auditor: Lindsay Gilmour, Organic Planet

Scope: USDA Harmonized GAP

### Allen Neighborhood Center – Lansing, MI

Thursday, June 22 – Friday, June 23

Lead Auditor: Bob McCully, MDARD

Scope: USDA GAP/GHP