



FSMA

(Food Safety Modernization Act)


& BIRD CONTROL

Bird Gard[®]

STAY UP-TO-DATE ON REGULATIONS TO AVOID COSTLY PENALTIES

In 2011, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) created the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which was designed to reduce the chance of contamination at every point of the food supply chain, from production to transport to storage and packaging. As the ones responsible for growing produce, farmers represent the very beginning of this chain and are our first line of defense against foodborne illness.

While the FSMA does a lot of good in ensuring our food is protected, it puts a lot of responsibility and restrictions on farmers. The penalties for noncompliance are steep, including [fines north of \\$150,000 and potentially jail time](#). With that in mind, it is important to understand what specific rules in the FSMA apply to you as a farmer. Additionally, taking all the necessary steps not only protects you but the people that eat the food you grow as well.



"While there is much more to the FSMA than bird control, bird contamination is one of the top health and safety issues for growers."

TO HELP YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND THIS CRUCIAL SET OF REGULATIONS, THIS ARTICLE WILL COVER:

- ***How the FSMA affects farmers***
- ***Challenges of bird control***
- ***What the FSMA says about bird contamination***
- ***How to effectively control pest birds***
- ***Types of bird contamination***



HOW THE FSMA AFFECTS FARMERS

[According to the FDA,](#)

"about 48 million people get sick every year from food poisoning."

Of those, about 3 million people die. Add in the amount of money that is lost when products need to be recalled and the need for something new was apparent.

The FSMA is a huge, sweeping act of legislation that represents the biggest overhaul of food safety laws in almost a century. In particular, growers should focus on the [Produce Safety Rule](#). The Produce Safety Rule lays out a series of regulations for agricultural water, farmworker training and hygiene, biological soil amendments, equipment, buildings, tools and — the focus of this article — domesticated and wild animal control.

WHO IS EXEMPT FROM FSMA COVERAGE?

The FSMA doesn't apply to all growers, although virtually every farm is covered by some local or state regulation. The FSMA only applies to commercial farms that have annual sales of at least \$25,000 and the produce is normally consumed "raw". Most fruits, vegetables and nuts fall into this category.

Exempt produce that is not likely to be consumed raw includes pumpkins and potatoes. For further clarity, the FDA has compiled [a list of every exempt product](#).

THE PRODUCE SAFETY RULE

The Produce Safety Rules is a section of the FSMA that sets the "Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption." Most of what we'll discuss can be found in this section [here](#).

WHAT THE FSMA SAYS ABOUT BIRD CONTAMINATION

Pest bird populations can put your farm or property at a huge contamination risk and have been called out specifically in a few different places. One major change for growers to be aware of is the power that inspectors now have when visiting a site.

"Inspectors no longer need evidence of actual bird contamination."

Instead, they just need a reason to believe that "contamination could reasonably occur". This could mean having birds roosting uninhibited near a field or storage facility and either occurrence could result in a penalty.

"Specifically, the rules mandate that growers must take all measures reasonably necessary to identify produce that is likely to be contaminated. If you or the inspectors believe a section of your field is likely to have contamination, you can't harvest it."

"Believe" and "likely" are two subjective words that give inspectors a lot of freedom to make judgment calls about the quality of your farm and harvest. Now, more than ever, it is extremely important to make sure all your bases are covered so as not to give inspectors reason to penalize you.



THE FOOD SAFETY PLAN

To give growers some guidance, the FSMA outlines the need for a Food Safety Plan. This is something food growers must develop to ensure that their food remains healthy and clean from farm to plate.

These plans are specific to your facility and cover everything from production to storage and transport. Fortunately, the FDA has created a tool, the [Food Safety Plan Builder](#), to

help develop a comprehensive plan that adheres to all of the necessary guidelines.

TYPES OF BIRD DAMAGE AND CONTAMINATION

Bird damage takes many different forms depending on the type of pest birds in the area and the product you grow.



Bird droppings

This is the most common type of damage because birds don't have to land to contaminate an area. Wherever birds roost or continually fly is vulnerable to being contaminated by bird droppings. Not only is this hazardous for food, but it is also a health risk for anyone who works at such a location. Various pathogens can be found in bird droppings, many of which can be transmitted to humans.

Broken and damaged crops

Even if you can prevent birds from eating your crops, they can still damage and contaminate it simply by landing on it. Anything that is knocked to the ground by birds is essentially unsellable. The same goes for broken stalks that snap under the weight of a perching bird.



Eaten crops

Almost every crop that grows above ground is a food source for birds. While flocks of birds attacking a field is usually an obvious sign of trouble, some species, like robins, will stay under the foliage and do their damage out of sight.



EFFECTIVE BIRD CONTROL TECHNOLOGY

To repel birds and keep them out, [Bird Gard](#) uses solid state microchip technology to emit birds' natural distress and alarm calls to trigger their innate fear-and-flee response. Each species of bird has its own specific call that lets the rest of the flock know they are in danger. When birds hear it, instinct kicks in and they leave the area.

To prevent birds from becoming accustomed to the distress calls, a microprocessor randomly emits sounds in a completely unpredictable pattern and at random time intervals and random frequency levels.

Bird Gard units are so effective that ***we are the only bird control company that offers a 1-Year Unconditional Money-back Guarantee on every purchase.***



**1-YEAR
UNCONDITIONAL
MONEY-BACK
GUARANTEE**

CONTACT BIRD GARD

If you would like to make Bird Gard part of your Food Safety Plan, we can create a free proposal based on satellite imagery of your property. Bird Gard has a variety of products to repel birds, whether that means protecting one acre or thousands. Choosing the right equipment depends on a number of factors, including the dimensions of the field, the terrain, surrounding trees and any nearby neighbors.

**The FSMA requires much more from farmers than just keeping their facilities and products bird free. We highly recommend you familiarize yourself with the entire FSMA so you can take any necessary steps.*

You can give us a call right now to talk to one of our team members.

BIRDGARD.COM/CONTACT

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