

**Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project**  
729 Haywood Rd., #3  
Asheville, NC 28806  
(828) 236-1282  
[www.asapconnections.org](http://www.asapconnections.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Allison Perrett 828.236.1282, [allison@asapconnections.org](mailto:allison@asapconnections.org)  
Rose McLarney 828.236.1282, [rose@asapconnections.org](mailto:rose@asapconnections.org)

## **Fresh Produce Safety Training, October 6<sup>th</sup>**

**ASHEVILLE, NC (September 10, 2008)** –Food retailers and the food service industry are beginning to utilize Good Agricultural Practices” (GAP) and “Good Handling Practices” (GHP)-- third party audits to verify that farmers are producing vegetables and fruits as safely as possible. Farmers who want to continue to sell to these buyers should plan ahead to be in compliance. To help North Carolina growers and North Carolina Cooperative Extension agents prepare for GAP and GHP audits, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, North Carolina A&T, and the North Carolina Fresh Produce Safety Task Force are offering a training on fresh produce safety on October 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at a Buncombe County farm.

At the training session, experts from the North Carolina Fresh Produce Safety Task Force will provide information on the general practices that growers of fresh fruits and vegetables should use to handle fresh produce safely, reduce the potential for outbreaks of food-borne illnesses, and address the risks associated with the movement of fresh produce into the marketplace. After a general information session on GAP and GHP, a certification demonstration audit will be conducted at the farm. The farm sells produce to wholesale markets and directly to consumers.

Farmers and agricultural professionals who want to attend should visit <http://www.asapconnections.org/safetytraining.html> for more information and to register. Register early because space is limited.

Instructional materials are drawn from fresh produce safety modules developed by the North Carolina Fresh Produce Safety Task Force. Funding for this workshop is provided by the USDA Risk Management Agency.

For more information, please contact Keith Baldwin at 336.334.7957 or [kbaldwin@ncat.edu](mailto:kbaldwin@ncat.edu) or Allison Perrett at 828.236.1282 or [allison@asapconnections.org](mailto:allison@asapconnections.org).

### **ABOUT THE APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT**

The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project is a nonprofit organization that supports farmers and rural communities in the mountains of Western North Carolina and the Southern Appalachians by providing education, mentoring, promotion, web resources, and community and policy development. ASAP’s mission is to create and expand regional community-based and integrated food systems that are locally owned and controlled, environmentally sound, economically viable and health-promoting.

###