

Impact Assessment, Goals & Monitoring

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1	MISSION	. 3
2	IMPACT ASSESSMENT	. 3
3	REVISIONS	. 3
4	PRODUCTION PROCESS STEPS	. 3
5	RISK CATEGORIES	. 4
6	RISKS	. 5
7	MATRIX	. 7
8	GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	. 8
9	PARTICIPATION AND ADOPTION GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES	. 8
10	CROP AND ENVIRONMENT GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES	. 9
11	LABOR GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES	10
12	OPERATION GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES	12
13	MONITORING AND EVALUATING (M&E) OBJECTIVES	13
14	MONITORING AND EVALUATING (M&E) DATA POINTS	14
15	PROGRAM EQUIVALENCE	15
16	Appendix A: GAPC Risks, Goals, Objectives and Monitoring and Evaluation Data Points :	16

1 MISSION

1.1 Connecting farmers and buyers through environmentally and socially sustainable good agricultural practices. GAP Connections provides leadership, education, and resources for the adoption and promotion of standards and practices which produce a quality crop while protecting, sustaining or enhancing the environment, ensure the safety and rights of farm laborers, and recognize those producers who are committed to a higher standard.

2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 GAP Connections' (GAPC) impact assessment steps through the production process of growing a crop and identifies the labor and crop and environmental risks within each step. Each risk is then labelled low to high according to the likelihood and the severity of an occurrence.
- 2.2 GAPC then prioritizes those risks based on the scale of likelihood and severity and determines goals to minimize or reduce those risks. GAPC monitors and evaluates the progress towards identified goals by identifying Monitoring and Evaluating data points for each goal (See section 14).

3 REVISIONS

3.1 GAPC revisits the impact assessment annually to allow for updates due to progress, new information, and newly identified challenges.

4 PRODUCTION PROCESS STEPS

- 4.1 Crop Planning and Marketing
 - 4.1.1 Agreements and applications for labor, input purchases, crop insurance, and financing
 - 4.1.2 Worker Housing Site Selection and Inspections
 - 4.1.3 Land acquisition and planning
 - 4.1.4 Farm Transition Planning
- 4.2 Arrival of Workers and Production
 - 4.2.1 Workers Compensation Insurance
 - 4.2.2 Training
 - 4.2.3 Greenhouse Seeding
 - 4.2.4 Application of CPAs in Greenhouse
 - 4.2.5 Transplanting

- 4.2.6 Scouting
- 4.2.7 Topping
- 4.2.8 Application of CPAs in Field
- 4.2.9 Harvesting
- 4.3 Market Preparation and Delivery
 - 4.3.1 Grading and Stripping
 - 4.3.2 Baling
 - 4.3.3 Delivery
 - 4.3.4 Payment for product
 - 4.3.5 Workers complete seasonal tasks, job, and/or return home

5 **RISK CATEGORIES**

- 5.1 Crop and Environment
 - 5.1.1 Soil Health
 - 5.1.2 Water
 - 5.1.3 Natural Habitats
 - 5.1.4 Climate Change
- 5.2 Labor
 - 5.2.1 Livelihoods and Living Income
 - 5.2.2 Human and Labor Rights
 - 5.2.3 Safe Working Environment
 - 5.2.4 Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
- 5.3 Operation
 - 5.3.1 Income, Financing and Profitability
 - 5.3.2 Stress and Mental Health of Growers
 - 5.3.3 Succession and/or Transition Plans
 - 5.3.4 Safe Working Environment

6 RISKS

Production Process Step	Step Details	Risk	Risk Category	Likelihood	Severity
	Researching and making agreements for input purchases, crop insurance, and operating or capital financing. Discussing and deciding transition plans, choice of enterprises, and labor need and source. Worker housing site selection, inspections, and repairs or improvements.	Stress and Mental Health of Growers	Operation: Stress and Mental Health of Growers	Medium	Medium
		Succession and/or Transition Plans	Operation: Succession and/or Transition Plans	Medium	High
Сгор		Condition of Worker Housing	Labor: Human & Labor Rights	Medium	High
Planning and Marketing	Land selection, acquisition, and planning.	Soil Fertility and Health	Crop & Environment: Soil Health	Low	Low
		CPA Use	Crop & Environment: Natural Habitats	Low	Low
		Release of Carbon from Soils (Crop Rotation)	Crop & Environment: Climate Change	Low	Medium
	Receiving and completing marketing agreements for product.	Income, Financing and Profitability	Operation: Income, Financing and Profitability	Medium	Medium

Production Process Step	Step Details	Risk	Risk Category	Likelihood	Severity	
		Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining	Labor: Human & Labor Rights	Medium	High	
	Worker Policies and Expectations	Vulnerable Labor	Labor: Human & Labor Rights	Low	High	
		Modern Slavery	Labor: Human & Labor Rights	Low	High	
		Fair Treatment	Labor: Human & Labor Rights	Low	High	
	Maintaining the worker housing site	Condition of Worker Housing	Labor: Human & Labor Rights	Medium	High	
		Occupational Health and Safety of Workers	Labor: Safe Working Environment	Medium	High	
Arrival of Workers and		Occupational Health and Safety of Growers	Operation: Safe Working Environment	Medium	High	
Production		Soil Fertility and Health	Crop & Environment: Soil Health	Low	Low	
		Biodiversity and Protected Areas	Crop & Environment: Natural Habitats	Low	Low	
	Growing and harvesting crop	-	Deforestation	Crop & Environment: Natural Habitats	High	Low
		Water Quality	Crop & Environment: Water	High	High	
		Water Stress	Crop & Environment: Water	Medium	High	
			Inefficient use of energy	Crop & Environment: Climate Change	Low	Medium
			Release of Carbon from Soils (Tillage)	Crop & Environment: Climate Change	High	High

Production Process Step	Step Details	Risk	Risk Category	Likelihood	Severity
Market	Preparing product	Occupational Health and Safety of Workers	Labor: Safe Working Environment	Medium	High
Preparation and Delivery	and delivery to buyer	Occupational Health and Safety of Growers	Operation: Safe Working Environment	Medium	High

7 MATRIX

	High	• Vulnerable Labor • Modern Slavery • Fair Treatment	 Condition of Worker Housing Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining Occupational Health and Safety of Workers Occupational Health and Safety of Growers Water Stress Succession and/or 	Water Quality Release of Carbon from Soils (Tillage Practices)					
Severity	Medium	 Release of Carbon from Soils (Crop Rotation) Inefficient use of energy 	Transition Plans Stress and Mental Health of Growers Income, Financing and Profitability 						
	Low	 CPA Use Soil Fertility and Health Biodiversity and Protected Areas Release of Carbon from Soils 		• Deforestation					
		Low	Medium	High					
	Likelihood								

8 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The Goals and Objectives developed are categorized into four categories (1) Participation and Adoption, (2) Crop and Environment, (3) Labor and (4) Operation. The purpose of the goals and objectives is to outline how GAPC plans to fulfil its mission and help reduce the risks and impacts of agricultural production.
 - 8.1.1 **Participation and Adoption:** Participation in GAPC Programs and adoption of GAPC Certification Standards and practices allow for GAPC to create change, have influence, and ultimately show progress toward fulfilling its mission and reaching its other goals.
 - 8.1.2 **Crop and Environment:** The Crop and Environment goals and objectives encourage improvements and demonstrate progress toward producing a quality crop while protecting, sustaining, or enhancing the environment.
 - 8.1.3 **Labor:** The Labor goals and objectives encourage improvements and demonstrate progress toward ensuring the safety and rights of farm laborers.
 - 8.1.4 **Operation:** The Operation goals and objectives encourage improvements and demonstrate progress toward creating sustainable farming operations that create a safe, healthy, and productive livelihood for the growers and farm laborers and provide economic activity for the communities in which they exist.

9 PARTICIPATION AND ADOPTION GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES

9.1 Goal

• Increase the percentage of operations involved in tobacco production that are GAPC Certified and monitored by GAPC.

9.2 Objectives

- By 2025, 90% of tobacco acreage GAPC Certified.
- By 2025, conduct over 10,000 monitoring visits to verify compliance with GAPC Certification Standards.
- By 2025, 13,000 worker interviews conducted to verify compliance with GAPC Certification Standards.

9.3 Strategy

- Increase awareness of the GAPC Certification Program within the tobacco industry among growers and companies by speaking at grower events and participating at industry events.
- Decrease burdens or obstacles preventing growers from participating by continuing to improve the efficiency of procedures and policies that may be unintentionally creating barriers.
- Continue to facilitate the efficient selection of approved and trained auditing firms in order to schedule and complete monitoring activities by enhancing the scheduling information and tools available to growers and auditors.

10 CROP AND ENVIRONMENT GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES

10.1 Goal(s)

- Optimize crop production while reducing agrochemical and fertilizer use.
- Increase the energy efficiency on operations in order to decrease fuel consumption and decrease carbon emissions.
- Increase the conservation of natural resources such as soil and water.
- Increase the available information on and use of hazardous waste disposal programs for agrochemicals such as "Clean Sweeps", and non-hazardous recycling programs such as the Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC).
- Decrease deforestation related to curing with dark-fired tobacco by increasing the awareness and information about the practice of high-volume curing in dark-fired tobacco and its related benefits.

10.2 Objectives

- By 2025, 100% of tobacco operations that have completed an audit have a documented scouting program for pests and record the scouting information by field/tract following GAPC Certification Standards.
- By 2025, 100% of tobacco operations that have completed an audit make application decisions using soil test results that are no more than three years old.
- By 2025, 85% of flue-cured tobacco operations that have completed an audit use energy efficient curing systems in flue-cured barns (i.e. use automated curing controls to measure temperature) therefore decreasing fuel consumption and decrease carbon emissions.
- By 2025, 30% of air and fire-cured tobacco acreage is planted using conservation tillage practices (i.e. minimum or reduced tillage, strip tillage, no tillage)
- By 2025, 60% of tobacco operations that have completed an audit recycle their non-hazardous waste.

- By 2025, 70% of tobacco operations participating in GAPC Certification participate in a hazardous waste recycle or disposal program.
- By 2023, include material and resources on the practice of and benefits of high-volume curing in dark-fired tobacco at GAPC Annual Training targeting geographies where dark-tobacco is grown.

10.3 Strategy

- Educate and provide information to growers on the:
 - Scouting and economic thresholds.
 - Types of soil testing to maximize soil productivity while protecting the environment from contamination by runoff and leaching of excess fertilizers.
 - Importance of CPA and fertilizer application and their impact on the crop and environment.
 - Importance of monitoring soil moisture and properly maintaining irrigation equipment, if used, to minimize waste, and
 - Types of conservation tillage and how to adopt conservation tillage practices that conserve energy resources, water, and soil by reducing tillage intensity and the crop residue retention.
 - Existence and importance of watershed requirements in growing regions with grower members.
 - Programs and offerings for the proper disposal of agrochemicals and the recycling of hazardous and non-hazardous waste.
- Educate and provide information to growers who grow flue-cured tobacco on their operation about the energy efficiencies gained with curing controls.
- Work with tobacco extension specialist in dark-tobacco to highlight the research and information on high-volume curing in dark-fired tobacco in GAPC Annual Training.

10.4 Targeted Risks and Impacts (Likelihood, Severity)

- Water Quality (High, High)
- Release of Carbon from Soils (Tillage) (High, High)
- Biodiversity and Protected Areas (Low, Low)
- CPA Use (Low, Low)
- Deforestation (High, Low)

11 LABOR GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES

- 11.1 Goal(s)
 - Ensure the safety and rights of farm laborers.

- Increase the access to safety and compliance training in worker's native language.
- Increase the awareness of risks and best practices associated with Farm Labor Contractors (FLCs) to help avoid non-compliance with U.S. laws and regulations of FLC's and ensure the safety and rights of farm laborers who are obtained through a FLC or H-2ALC.
- Improve the conditions of worker housing.
- Provide a way for farmworkers on a GAPC Grower Member's farm to ask for information and to express and seek resolution to concerns.

11.2 Objectives

- By 2025, 10,000 farm workers trained at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance events.
- By 2025, train over 500 farm workers through the GAPC Customized Farmworker Training Program.
- By 2025, over 100 worker concerns resolved through the GAPC Worker Concern Helpline or remediation process of GAPC Certification monitoring activities.
- By 2025, 20% of tobacco operations with employer provided housing and participating in GAPC Certification and Housing Programs are Gold Star Growers (NC) or have achieved GAPC Elevated Housing classification for one or more units of housing.
- By 2025, 100% of growers with hired labor participating in GAPC Certification Programs have an anti-discrimination policy.

11.3 Strategy

- Organize and promote GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance training events annually in different regions across the GAPC membership to allow for access to a broad range of growers, workers, and locations.
- Promote and conduct on-farm customized safety and compliance training in workers' native language.
- Develop and promote the GAPC Elevated Housing Program which verifies growers who go above and beyond the requirements of law in their employer provided housing.
- Continue to bring awareness to the GAPC WCH among growers and workers with posters, training, handouts, and direct communication.
- Build capacity, resources, and partnerships to help efficiently address and resolve worker concerns.
- Continue to encourage growers to adopt an anti-discrimination policy by explaining the benefits and importance of having the policy and increasing the awareness and use of GAPC anti-discrimination policy template.

11.4 Targeted Risks and Impacts (Likelihood, Severity)

- Conditions of Worker Housing (Medium, High)
- Occupational Health and Safety of Workers (Medium, High)
- Fair Treatment (Low, High)

12 OPERATION GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVES

12.1 Goal(s)

- Ensure the safety of growers and their families.
- Assist in the succession and transition planning process for an operation by providing education, information and resources on succession and transition planning.
- Help increase the resiliency of growers as they deal with the stress and mental health concerns that can come with the hazardous nature of day-today tasks, volatile and unforgiving markets and unpredictable weather and crop yields.

12.2 Objectives

- By 2025, 500 growers trained at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance events.
- Include Succession and Transition Planning resources and topics as a choice each year in GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events.
- Include resources and training topics on the skills to better identify, cope and possibly even overcome stress and mental health issues such as anxiety or depression at GAPC Annual Grower Training and at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events.

12.3 Strategy

- Organize and promote GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance training events annually in different regions across the GAPC membership to allow for access to a broad range of growers, workers, and locations.
- Develop, identify and/or procure the following topics and resources to be included in GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety Events:
 - o Succession and transition planning
 - Skills to better identify, cope and possibly even overcome stress and mental health issues associated with operating a farming operation
- Add information and resources to GAPC's website and monthly newsletters on the warning signs and symptoms of stress and mental health issues such as anxiety or depression so growers can identify and seek help in coping or overcoming.

12.4 Targeted Risks and Impacts (Likelihood, Severity)

- Occupational Health and Safety of Growers (Medium, High)
- Succession and/or Transition Plans (Medium, High)
- Stress and Mental Health of Growers (Medium, Medium)

13 MONITORING AND EVALUATING (M&E) OBJECTIVES

- 13.1 Monitoring and measuring improvements of GAPC Grower Members and Operations in relation to GAPC Certification and Program Standards, goals and objectives, helps refine and continuously improve the changes and improvements GAPC hopes to achieve within the industry, monitor organizational effectiveness, and provide opportunities for further engagement with industry and other important stakeholders.
- 13.2 Our M&E Program serves three main purposes:
 - 13.2.1 To share the results of the GAPC Certification Program and other GAPC programs, resources, and services to offer a platform for communicating on the outcomes and impacts of industry adoption of GAPC Certification Standards, participation in GAPC Programs, and the use of GAPC resources and services.
 - 13.2.2 To enable GAPC to better understand the effectiveness of its policies, procedures and standards in reaching goals and objectives.
 - 13.2.3 To enable GAPC to better understand the effectiveness of the organization and strategies, and to identify issues, trends, and areas for improvement.
- 13.3 To support the M&E Process GAPC will release a Monitoring and Evaluation Report annually beginning in 2023 to provide stakeholders with a view on key improvements achieved by the GAPC Programs, resources, and services. This report is based on analysis by GAPC staff using GAPC monitoring and verification data from monitoring and verification visits. The report seeks to assess the performance of the organization in delivering its mission and reaching its goals and objectives as well as to identify the measurable outcomes directly achieved by GAPC Certified Grower Members.

14 MONITORING AND EVALUATING (M&E) DATA POINTS

- 14.1 The M&E data points are identified as data points that can assist in the measurement of progress and success toward GAPC's identified goals.
- 14.2 Participation and Adoption M&E Data Points
 - Acres on operations with a GAPC Certified Grower
 - Number of monitoring visits conducted
 - Number of worker interviews conducted
- 14.3 Crop and Environment M&E Data Points
 - Number of tobacco operations with a documented scouting program
 - Number of tobacco operations that make application decisions using soil tests results that are no more than three years old.
 - Number of flue-cured tobacco operations that use an energy efficient curing system in flue-cured barns
 - Number of tobacco operations using a conservation tillage practice
 - Number of tobacco operations that recycle their non-hazardous waste
 - Number of tobacco operations participating in a hazardous waste recycle or disposal program
 - Training topics used in GAPC Annual Grower Training
 - Number of dark-fired tobacco growers who received GAPC Annual Grower Training
 - Number of dark-fired tobacco growers who use high-volume curing
- 14.4 Labor M&E Data Points
 - Number of growers with an anti-discrimination policy
 - Number of farm workers trained at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance events
 - Number of farm workers trained through the GAPC Customized Farmworker Training Program
 - Number of worker concerns that were resolved through the GAPC Worker Concern Helpline
 - Number of operations with employer provided housing that are either Gold Star Growers (NC) or have achieved Elevated Housing classification for one or more units of housing.

- 14.5 Operation M&E Data Points
 - Number of growers who attended a GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance event.
 - List of Training Topics and resources provided at GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events
 - Number of growers who attended GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events
 - List of Training Topics and resources provided at GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events
 - Number of growers who attended GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events

15 PROGRAM EQUIVALENCE

15.1 Currently there are no programs that have equivalence with the GAPC Certification Program. This is something that is being researched and considered by GAPC.

16 APPENDIX A: GAPC RISKS, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION DATA POINTS

Risk Category	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Goal	Objective(s)	M&E Data Point
NA	NA	NA	NA	Increase the percentage of operations involved in tobacco production that are GAPC Certified and monitored by GAPC.	 By 2025, 90% of tobacco acreage GAPC Certified. By 2025, conduct over 10,000 monitoring visits to verify compliance with GAPC Certification Standards. By 2025, 13,000 worker interviews conducted to verify compliance with GAPC Certification Standards. 	 Acres on operations with a GAPC Certified Grower Number of monitoring visits conducted Number of worker interviews conducted
Crop & Environment: Water	Water Quality	High	High	Optimize crop production while	 By 2025, 100% of tobacco operations that have completed an audit have a documented scouting program for pests and record the scouting information by field/tract following GAPC Certification Standards. 	 Number of tobacco operations with a documented scouting program Number of tobacco operations
Crop & Environment: Soil Health	CPA Use	Low	Low	reducing agrochemical and fertilizer use.	 By 2025, 100% of tobacco operations that have completed an audit make application decisions using soil test results that are no more than three years old. 	that make application decisions using soil tests results that are no more than three years old.
Crop & Environment: Climate Change	Inefficient use of energy	Low	Medium	Increase the energy efficiency on operations in order to decrease fuel consumption and decrease carbon emissions.	 By 2025, 85% of flue-cured tobacco operations that have completed an audit use energy efficient curing systems in flue- cured barns (i.e. use automated curing controls to measure temperature) therefore decreasing fuel consumption and decrease carbon emissions. 	 Number of flue-cured tobacco operations that use an energy efficient curing system in flue- cured barns

Risk Category	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Goal	Objective(s)	M&E Data Point
Crop & Environment: Climate Change	Release of Carbon from Soils (Tillage)	High	High	Increase the conservation of natural resources such as soil and water.	 By 2025, 30% of air and fire- cured tobacco acreage is planted using conservation tillage practices (i.e. minimum or reduced tillage, strip tillage, no tillage) 	 Number of tobacco operations using a conservation tillage practice
Crop & Environment: Natural Habitats	Biodiversity and Protected Areas	Low	Low	Increase the available information on and use of hazardous waste disposal programs for agrochemicals such as "Clean Sweeps", and non-hazardous recycling programs such as the Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC).	 By 2025, 60% of tobacco operations that have completed an audit recycle their non- hazardous waste. By 2025, 70% of tobacco operations participating in GAPC Certification participate in a hazardous waste recycle or disposal program. 	 Number of tobacco operations that recycle their non- hazardous waste Number of tobacco operations participating in a hazardous waste recycle or disposal program
Crop & Environment: Natural Habitats	Deforestation	High	Low	Decrease deforestation related to curing with dark-fired tobacco by increasing the awareness and information about the practice of high- volume curing in dark- fired tobacco and its related benefits.	 By 2023, include material and resources on the practice of and benefits of high-volume curing in dark-fired tobacco at GAPC Annual Training targeting geographies where dark-tobacco is grown. 	 Training topics used in GAPC Annual Grower Training Number of dark-fired tobacco growers who received GAPC Annual Grower Training Number of dark-fired tobacco growers who use high-volume curing
Labor: Human and Labor Rights	Fair Treatment	Low	High	Ensure the safety and rights of farm laborers.	 By 2025, 100% of growers with hired labor participating in GAPC Certification Programs have an anti-discrimination policy. 	 Number of growers with an anti-discrimination policy

Risk Category	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Goal	Objective(s)	M&E Data Point
Labor: Safe Working Environment	Occupational Health and Safety of Workers	Medium	High	Increase the access to safety and compliance training in worker's native language.	 By 2025, 10,000 farm workers trained at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance events. By 2025, train over 500 farm workers through the GAPC Customized Farmworker Training Program. 	 Number of farm workers trained at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance events. Number of farm workers trained through the GAPC Customized Farmworker Training Program.
Labor: Human and Labor Rights	Fair Treatment	Low	High	Provide a way for farmworkers on a GAPC Grower Member's farm to ask for information and to express and seek resolution to concerns.	 By 2025, over 100 worker concerns resolved through the GAPC Worker Concern Helpline or remediation process of GAPC Certification monitoring activities. 	 Number of worker concerns that were resolved through the GAPC Worker Concern Helpline
Labor: Human and Labor Rights	Conditions of Worker Housing	Medium	High	Improve the conditions of worker housing.	 By 2025, 20% of operations with employer provided housing and participating in GAPC Certification and Housing Programs are Gold Star Growers (NC) or have achieved GAPC Elevated Housing classification for one or more units of housing. 	 Number of operations with employer provided housing that are either Gold Star Growers (NC) or have achieved Elevated Housing classification for one or more units of housing.
Operation: Safe Working Environment	Occupational Health and Safety of Growers	Medium	High	Ensure the safety of growers and their families.	 By 2025, 500 growers trained at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance events. 	 Number of growers who attended a GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance event.

Risk Category	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Goal	Objective(s)	M&E Data Point
Operation: Succession and/or Transition Plans	Succession and/or Transition Plans	Medium	High	Assist in the succession and transition planning process for an operation by providing education, information and resources on succession and transition planning.	 Include Succession and Transition Planning resources and topics as a choice each year in GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events. 	 List of Training Topics and resources provided at GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events Number of growers who attended GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events
Operation: Stress and Mental Health of Growers	Stress and Mental Health of Growers	Medium	Medium	Help increase the resiliency of growers as they deal with the stress and mental health concerns that can come with the hazardous nature of day-to-day tasks, volatile and unforgiving markets and unpredictable weather and crop yields.	 Include resources and training topics on the skills to better identify, cope and possibly even overcome stress and mental health issues such as anxiety or depression at GAPC Annual Grower Training and at GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events. 	 List of Training Topics and resources provided at GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events Number of growers who attended GAPC Annual Training and/or GAPC Farm Safety and Compliance Events