

Sample SOP:  
Cleaning Produce Transport Vehicles

**Revision: 2.0**

**Date: 8/4/2014**

1—Purpose

Describes the process for cleaning vans that carry fresh produce.

2—Scope

Applies to cleaning vans only. It does not cover any other farm produce delivery vehicles.

3—Responsibilities

The farm owner is responsible for determining the frequency of vehicle cleaning during the produce delivery season and making sure the vehicles are clean before each loading. The farm owner may assign the task to others, but the farm owner is responsible for making sure workers are trained to properly clean the van. Workers assigned to clean vehicles are responsible for following cleaning SOPs and documenting the cleaning was done. Workers should notify their supervisor or farm owner if they have any questions or notice safety issues they do not know how to address.

4—Materials

- Broom
- Water source with hose or pressure washer
- Air compressor and hose
- Detergent *[name]*
- Bucket for mixing detergent
- Tools for cleaning (brushes, cloths, etc.)

5—Procedures

- Select area for cleaning vehicles, making sure run-off will not contaminate fields, packing area, or environment. Cleaning should be done in designated areas only, such as:
- Designated area on the farm
- Commercial wash bay
- Open doors of van. Remove any personal property and items that should not get wet. Sweep out any debris.
- Blow out cab with air hose.
- Clean floors and behind the seat with a broom or brush to remove any debris before using water.
- Prepare bucket of detergent by mixing *[enter amount of detergent here]* and *[enter amount of water here]* water.
- Wipe down interior surfaces with a clean cloth and a detergent-water mixture that you have mixed in a bucket.
- Turn on water. Use hose and water to spray the inside of van. Make sure to spray ceiling and walls as well as floor. Give special attention to cracks, crevices, and areas near door openings and pockets. All cleaning steps should follow a top-down or “top first, bottom last” approach.
- Scrub inside of van with clean cloths and/or scrub brushes using the detergent you mixed in previous step. Make sure to scrub ceiling and walls. Pay special attention to cracks and crevices near door openings.
- Use hose and water to rinse the inside of van. Make sure to spray the ceiling, walls and floor. Give special attention to cracks and crevices and areas near door openings.
- Allow the vehicle to air dry.
- Shut the doors and/or take other steps, as necessary, to keep your clean vehicle clean.
- When dirty, wash the outside of the van using the same method of rinse, scrub, rinse using water and detergent as you did on the inside. This is to avoid transferring dirt from the outside of the vehicle to the inside products during delivery.
- Document and initial vehicle washing on *[enter record keeping system here, e.g., log sheet]*

## Sample Refrigerated Truck Loading Log

*Note: This checklist can be adapted for a non-refrigerated vehicle. Delete the non-relevant checklist items.*

### Preloading

The vehicle is clean and in good condition.

Refrigeration unit is operating properly and at *[enter temperature range here]\**.

The trailer or container is pre-cooled (or pre-warmed).

Refrigeration air chutes or ducts are properly installed and in good repair.

There is no evidence of insect or rodent infestation.

There are no off odors that might indicate contamination of the vehicle.

Door seals are in good condition and seal tightly when closed.

Walls are free of cracks or holes.

Front bulkhead is installed.

Floor drains are open.

Floor grooves are free of debris.

Inside length, height, and width is adequate for the load.

Load locks or other devices are available to secure load.

\*Thermometers and thermostats need to be calibrated periodically to ensure proper function. Develop a schedule for calibrating necessary equipment.

### Loading

Workers have received health and hygiene training and follow the farm's policies.

Workers loading vehicle have been trained on how to avoid damaging fresh produce while loading.

Hand-stacked loads use an airflow loading pattern with a header stack and lengthwise air channels.

(Reference: Ashby)

Top- and bottom-air delivery vehicles are loaded with offset-by-layers pattern or center-load unit; loading tight against flat walls is avoided.

Allow at least 4 inches of space between end of load and rear doors for return air.

Use pallets on floor if floor channels or ducts are less than 2 1/4 inches (6 cm) deep.

Secure unit loads with one or more of the following: air bags, bracing, shrink film, netting, or strapping.

Secure hand-stacked loads at rear with wood gates, load bars, or other devices.

### Unloading

The Bill of Lading (BOL) matches what is in the vehicle.

The product and the pallets on which the product was shipped are in good physical condition.

For refrigerated deliveries, check that the products meet established specifications for delivery—specifically temperature.

For a refrigerated load, the load temperature is maintained in all four corners, especially at the backdoor.

Unload boxes or pallets onto carts, dollies, or via forklift to designated location. Avoid placing produce boxes directly on the ground.

Document delivery on shipping log sheet.

This checklist is modified from information found in Ashby, B. Hunt. *Protecting Perishable Foods During Transport by Truck*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, September 1995, reprinted July 2006. (available Web: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELDEV3021003>)