



CTAHR Farm Food Safety: Good Agricultural Practices

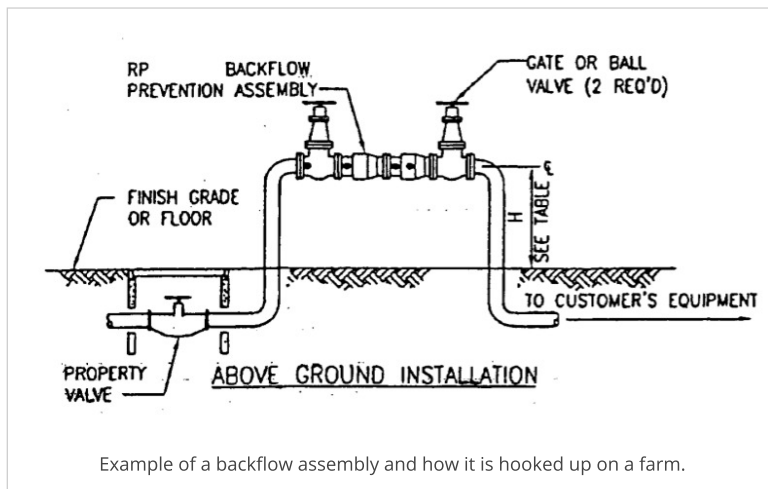
Science-based education for Hawai'i growers & handlers.



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Backflow Prevention & Cross-Connections:

Some farmers believe that backflow preventers are required only if they are getting agricultural water rates. This is untrue. ALL FARMS in Hawai'i, connected to a public water system in some way, must have an APPROVED, MAINTAINED, and ANNUALLY tested backflow preventer.



Example of a backflow assembly and how it is hooked up on a farm.

According to the [EPA Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 \(SDWA\)](#), US farms (and many other businesses and residents) are required to have backflow preventers on their water systems that have cross-connections to a public water source. Pathogens, fertilizers, pesticides, rust and other farm contamination could be sucked into a public water system should a farm water system experience a reverse in the water direction due to “back-siphonage” (which could occur, for example, if the fire department had to draw a significant amount of water from a hydrant near a farm to fight a home or brush fire) or “back-pressure” resulting from more pressure than the potable source it is connected to. While the chances of these problems happening is relatively small, one occurrence could contaminate a large community water source. A good overview on this issue can be found [here](#). In Hawai'i, all counties follow and enforce the SDWA. Also, on Good Agricultural Practices audits, there is at least one question about a backflow preventer on a farm/ranch or in a packing house/processor. Click on the links below to see specifically how your county administers the SDWA.

- [City and County of Honolulu, Cross-Connection Section of the Board of Water Supply](#)
 - [Approved backflow devices \(O'ahu\)](#)
 - [Approved suppliers of backflow devices \(O'ahu\)](#)
 - [Approved installers and inspectors \(O'ahu\)](#)
 - [Agricultural water rate application \(O'ahu\)](#)
 - [Water system standards – call Hawai'i counties using \(Section 107\)](#)
- [Hawai'i County, Department of Water Supply](#)
- [Maui County, Department of Water Supply](#)
 - [Rules for backflow devices \(Maui\)](#)
 - [Water system standards – call Hawai'i counties using \(Section 107\)](#)

