

July 14, 2014

Dear Growers,

A serious issue has been brought to the attention of the North Carolina Fresh Produce Task Force (NCFPSTF) regarding the use of household bleach mixed with soap when washing and disinfecting fresh produce. We want to remind you that only FOOD GRADE chlorine-based disinfectants can be used when disinfecting fruits and vegetables.

Most of you have a ready to eat product that can only be in direct contact with chlorine solutions that are approved under the food code of federal regulations Chapter 21 CFR Part 173. Please also avoid mixing non-food-grade soaps or other chemicals that are not food grade and/or not intended to be used in combination with chlorine solutions. Chlorine will react with some of these chemicals generating carcinogenic compounds that will remain in direct contact with the fruit or vegetable being disinfected.

If you are in doubt of which food grade chlorine-based disinfectants to use in direct contact with fruits and vegetables or how to handle and prepare these solutions, please refer to the attached pamphlet describing this and other important aspects linked to food grade chlorine-based disinfectants.

The NCFPSTF will be hosting workshops in the next two months targeting this specific practice. Further information of the locations, dates and times will be provided in the near future. A small video will also be available for all to download July 18th.

Sincerely,

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