

Managing Water

Clean water is essential to produce fresh fruit and vegetables that are safe to eat

Where does our water come from?

Consider the contamination risk of dams, boreholes, tanks, rivers and creeks, channels and pipes.

Where do we use our water?

Consider the specific risks of irrigation, spraying, hydroponics, produce wash, cooling and equipment cleaning water.

Does irrigation and spray water contact the harvestable parts of produce?

Implement a 48 hour exclusion period for lower quality water (*E. coli* >100 cfu/100ml) if product can be eaten uncooked.



We will manage and maintain our water source to minimise contamination from:

Human activities

Wild and domestic animals

Adjacent farm activities

Natural events such as flooding, drought or bushfire



We will:

Test each water source for pathogens at least annually, when risk changes (eg flooding event) and more frequently for higher risk situations

Apply an appropriate pathogen reduction step after harvest, as required

Critical limits for microbial water quality tests

E. coli < 1 cfu/100ml

Potable water limit for final wash or single-step wash and other applications (eg cooling, waxing and icing) if food will (or may) be eaten uncooked. Limit for hand washing water and cleaning of tools and equipment.

E. coli <100 cfu/100ml

Limit for final wash or single step wash and other post- harvest applications if produce is always eaten cooked. Pre-washing for foods that may be eaten uncooked. Pre-harvest water (irrigation and sprays).

E. coli >100 cfu/100ml

Pre-harvest water where water does not contact the harvestable part. If it contacts the harvestable part, a 48 hour exclusion period and maximum *E. coli* <1,000 cfu/100mL applies.

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