

Postharvest Water Use



Often, produce is washed before it is ready for sale. Washing water must be clean and safe to avoid product contamination.

Water supply and use



Untreated surface water (e.g. rivers, creeks, ponds) must not be used for postharvest activities.

Town water (or similar drinking water quality) should be used for drinking, handwashing, cleaning, washing, and cooling.

If you use town water or similar drinking quality water, then single-pass spray bar systems or washing hoses that are permanently connected do not need further water treatment. However, if the hoses have been disconnected and have come in contact with soil, produce or non-drinking quality water, they will need to be cleaned and decontaminated.

Washing

Wash dirty products (e.g. with excessive soil, bird or animal waste) separately to reduce the risk of spreading contamination to other products. Do these washes at the end of the day if possible.

If you use washing tanks or recycle washing water, use antimicrobial chemicals (e.g. chlorine, PAA) to keep the water safe.

Seek technical support to select and validate a sanitation system and antimicrobial chemical for the washing water.



System management



**Antimicrobials
keep water safe**

Ask your local chemical reseller to help you select the best sanitation system, and to provide written instructions on how to use and monitor that system.

Antimicrobial chemicals work better in clean water. Monitor the chemical levels several times during the day. Follow the instructions provided by the chemical reseller, adding more chemicals as required. Change the water regularly at set intervals, and also when it looks dirty.

Keep a record the chemical levels during the day, and the quantities that are added every time the levels are too low.

Antimicrobial chemicals are dangerous, so make sure everyone handling those chemicals follow the safety instructions on the label.