



April 12, 2019

Mandatory Cantaloupe Food Safety Program Continues in Effect With No Changes

TO ALL CALIFORNIA CANTALOUPE HANDLERS:

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (Department) is issuing this notice to remind all handlers of California cantaloupes that the mandatory cantaloupe food safety program of the California Cantaloupe Advisory Board (Board) continues in effect. Under this program, California handlers are subject to mandatory government inspection/audits to ensure that their operations comply with the *Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Production, Harvest, Cooling, Packing, Storage, and Transporting of Cantaloupes and Other Netted Melons*.

Department inspectors will continue to conduct mandatory on-site inspections/audits to verify handler compliance with the cantaloupe food safety program. Inspections/audits will be conducted on an announced and on an unannounced basis. In conducting their inspections/audits, inspectors will be checking handler compliance against safety checkpoints outlined in four audit checklists developed for the food safety program.

Please note that the Cantaloupe Board's food safety guidance document and audit checklists are unchanged from last year. The guidance document and audit checklists are accessible at: <http://www.californiacantaloupes.com/industry/food-safety-program>

Handlers found to be operating in compliance with the cantaloupe food safety program will be deemed to be "certified" handlers and will be listed as such on the Board's website. Handlers found to be out of compliance will be instructed on how to come back into compliance, and depending upon the seriousness of their violation, may lose their certified status. In such instances, handlers will be afforded the opportunity to contest their decertification should they wish to do so.

The Department's Inspection Services Division will be contacting cantaloupe handlers to schedule announced audits. It is critical that cantaloupe handlers are responsive when contacted by the Department. Failing to fully cooperate in the scheduling of the food safety audits will constitute a food safety violation.



2019 Food Safety Program
April 12, 2019
Page Two

If you have questions about the cantaloupe food safety program, please call any of the following:

- John Gilstrap, Manager of the Cantaloupe Advisory Board: (559) 591-5715
- Kevin Batchelor, CDFA's Inspection Services Division: (559) 595-8000
- Dennis Manderfield, CDFA's Marketing Branch: (916) 900-5018.

Sincerely,



Robert Maxie, Chief
Marketing Branch