

**Best Management Practices
For the Discharge of Produce Wash Water
from Wash and Pack Stations
To the Ground Surface**

Purpose:

The Department is aware that it is typical for farms to wash off post-harvest produce prior to packing for shipment. The areas used for washing off produce can be permanent or temporary in nature and siting. This document has been developed to provide guidance for the proper siting and discharge of agricultural produce wash water to the ground surface without the need to apply for Department approval. Two types of wash water may be discharged to the ground surface in accordance with this document. The two types are wash water made up solely of potable water, and wash water consisting of a potable water and sanitizer mixture where the sanitizer contains only hydrogen peroxide and/or peroxyacetic acid as active ingredients. Any discharge of produce wash water to the subsurface and any discharge of produce wash water containing sanitizers with active ingredients other than hydrogen peroxide and/or peroxyacetic acid will require approval from the Department's Groundwater Discharge Program prior to initiation of the discharge.

Best Management Practices/Guidelines:

An approval to discharge agricultural produce wash water is not required from the Department if the following best management practices/guidelines are adhered to:

- The wash water must consist solely of potable water, or of a potable water and sanitizer mixture where the sanitizer contains only hydrogen peroxide and/or peroxyacetic acid as active ingredients as approved by the USEPA and the RIDEM Division of Agriculture in the amounts prescribed in the USEPA approval and on the manufacturer's label.
- Detergents and sanitizers with active ingredients other than hydrogen peroxide and/or peroxyacetic acid may only be used to clean food contact surfaces as needed and as required, according to the methods defined in the manufacturer's label requirements for use on food contact surfaces. Detergents are considered cleansing agents such as soap, or any other cleaning surfactant, for the purposes of this document.
- Manufacturer's Safety Data Sheets for each sanitizer used during post-harvest activities must be kept on-site for reference.
- The wash sink(s), staging area, and packing area are to be used solely for produce washing, staging and packing. No food processing of produce may be performed in this area.
- All detergents and sanitizers must be stored in a location that will not allow accidental discharge to the wash water discharge system.
- The wash water being discharged to the ground surface must be controlled at all times such that it remains in the area designated for the discharge.

- The ground surface discharge area must be maintained on a regular basis to prevent pooling of discharged wash water. It is likely that the wash water will contain silt and fine soils that will have the tendency to plug the filtration media. Periodic removal of silt and fine soils from the ground surface discharge area will likely be required to allow for proper infiltration of the produce wash water.
- The wash water discharge area must be sited in an area that does not contain standing water/groundwater at any time during the year.
- The wash water discharge area must be sited to meet the following setbacks:
 - >400 feet from all public drinking water wells situated/installed in the overburden (sand and gravel);
 - >200 feet from all public drinking water wells situated/installed in bedrock;
 - >200 feet from all surface drinking water supply impoundments;
 - >100 feet from all other surface water bodies including but not limited to: lakes, ponds, reservoirs, rivers, tributaries, brooks, streams, and wetlands;
 - >100 feet from all private drinking water wells;
 - >25 feet from all OWTS (Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems);
 - >25 feet from all Groundwater Discharge Systems; and
 - >10 feet from all property lines.