

SAFE PREPARATION AND HANDLING OF FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



Information available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates an estimated 76 million cases of foodborne disease occur each year in the United States. Although most of these cases cause mild illness that lasts a day or two, the CDC also estimates there are 325,000 cases that require hospitalization and 5,000 deaths related to foodborne illnesses annually.

Foodborne disease is caused by the consumption of disease-causing microorganisms such as certain bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Fresh fruits and vegetables can become contaminated by fertilizers or with disease-causing microorganisms through contact with soils, water, harvesting equipment, raw sewage or fecal matter or other infected foods or food handlers. Foodborne disease from fresh fruits and vegetables can be prevented by following several simple food preparation and handling methods.

For additional information about safe preparation and handling of fresh fruits and vegetables, go to the Clover Safe note at: <http://ucanr.org/cloversafe>.

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