

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA PESTICIDE MONITORING PROGRAM



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## California Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program: Overview

As part of the Department of Pesticide Regulation's (DPR) mission to protect human health, the California Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program routinely samples and tests fresh, raw produce for illegal pesticide residues.



## Where in California can DPR collect produce samples?

California Food and Agricultural Code §12581 authorizes DPR to inspect and take samples of any produce grown, processed, packed, stored, shipped, transported, delivered for shipment, or sold in the state.

DPR collects produce samples throughout California's food supply chain including retail and wholesale markets, chain distribution centers, farmer's markets, packing facilities, and cooling facilities.

Businesses are randomly selected for routine sampling to help achieve the ultimate goals of this program, making sure food sold within California is safe to eat, and creating a "level playing field" by ensuring all businesses are following the law.

## What to expect when DPR samples your business.

On arrival at your business and prior to collecting any samples, DPR residue program samplers will identify themselves and request to speak to either the facility manager or an on-site person in charge to explain the purpose of their visit.

Residue program samplers will collect representative samples of different types of raw fruits and vegetables. In general, each sample is approximately 2lbs. of produce collected from a single lot of produce.



At your request, the sampler can collect a duplicate sample from the same lot; this duplicate sample will be left at the facility.

To link the sampled produce to the lot, samplers will take photographs of the sampled produce, containers, and identifying lot numbers and labels.

## What are the samples tested for?

DPR residue program staff send the samples to the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Laboratories for testing for nearly 500 different pesticides and pesticide breakdown products. DPR's Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program enforces the pesticide residue tolerances set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).

It is illegal to pack, ship, or sell produce with pesticide residues above U.S. EPA established tolerances or where no tolerances have been established. FAC §12671.

## What happens if illegal pesticide residues are found on a produce sample?



If a produce sample has illegal residues a DPR representative will:

- Notify you with the sample results.
- Inform you that it is illegal for this produce to be packed, shipped, or sold.
- Quarantine any remaining containers from the sampled lot still in your possession. Quarantined produce cannot be moved without prior approval by DPR.
- Request purchasing information for the produce. This information is crucial to trace the produce back to its origin to ensure a level playing field for vendors and protect your clients and the public.

## What are my options after a lot is quarantined?

Only with prior approval from DPR -

1. You may dispose of the commodity on-site.
2. You may be allowed to recondition the produce to remove the illegal pesticides from the produce, or dispose of the produce for by-products.
3. You may transfer the quarantined lot of produce to another location for disposal or reconditioning.

You must contact DPR for additional requirements for the above options before moving quarantined produce.

It is unlawful to move or disturb quarantined produce except under specific DPR direction.

You have the right to appeal the result by writing to the DPR Director within three days of being notified of the result. FAC §12610

## Where can I get additional information about the samples and next steps?

DPR contact information is on the front side of this flyer. If you have additional questions about your sample results or for other information about the residue testing program, please contact the appropriate regional office or contact DPR headquarters.

### **MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE HERE:**

Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program

<https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/enforce/residue/rsmonmnu.htm>

Food Safety Information & Links

<https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/quicklinks/foodsafte.htm>

Produce with Illegal Pesticide Residue Fines and Settlements

[https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/enforce/residue/pesticide\\_residue.htm](https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/enforce/residue/pesticide_residue.htm)