

Premises and equipment

If you're a grower or primary processor of berries, leafy greens or melons, you need to make sure the structures, equipment and vehicles you use for growing, harvesting and primary processing produce do not make the food unsafe to eat.



Horticulture
InfoBite

What are premises and equipment?

These are equipment, infrastructure, sheds or packhouses and other structures and vehicles that are used for the growing, harvesting, handling and storage of fresh produce.

This also includes irrigation pipes, and equipment such as cutting knives, conveyor belts, bins and boxes. These items can be a potential source of contamination from harmful bacteria, chemicals and physical hazards (e.g. wood, glass or metal fragments).

What are the requirements?

Primary producers and primary processors of berries, leafy vegetables and melons must do what they reasonably can to make sure their premises and equipment are designed, constructed, maintained and operated so they can be effectively cleaned and (if necessary) sanitised, and do not contaminate the produce.

This means you must ensure the buildings, equipment and vehicles you use are well constructed (e.g. made of non-porous material, easy to access and clean), kept in good condition (e.g. regularly checked for metal fatigue or loose pieces) and regularly cleaned and (where appropriate) sanitised, so they do not contaminate your fresh produce.

These requirements are under primary production and processing standards for [berries](#), [leafy vegetables](#) and [melons](#).

Does this apply to me?

In the Standards:

- **A primary producer** is a business that grows and/or harvests berries, leafy vegetables or melons.
- **A primary processor** is a business that does any of the following with: berries, leafy vegetables or melons. This includes, but is not limited to: washing, trimming, sorting, sanitising, storing, combining, packing, and transporting between packhouses.

Getting it right – reducing your risk

Things you can do to make sure your premises and equipment do not contaminate your produce include checking:

- Floors are designed and constructed to minimise risks of contaminating produce (e.g. so water cannot form pools that could splash onto fresh produce).
- Surfaces that directly contact produce are able to be cleaned and are regularly cleaned and, where appropriate, sanitised.
- Harvest and processing equipment is regularly inspected and replaced or repaired as needed.
- Lighting in growing, packing and storage areas is bright enough for tasks to be done properly (e.g. to allow effective inspection of washed produce).
- Chemicals, fertilisers and farm machinery are stored away from fresh produce packing, handling and storage areas.

Need more information?

- [Contact your state/territory food regulatory authority](#)
- [Primary Production and Processing Standards \(Chapter 4\)](#)
- [Fresh Produce Safety Centre – Guidelines for Fresh Produce Food Safety 2022](#)