

**ALLIANCE FOR FOOD AND FARMING
CALIFORNIA TOMATO FARMERS
FLORIDA FRUIT AND VEGETABLE ASSOCIATION
FLORIDA TOMATO COMMITTEE
PRODUCE MARKETING ASSOCIATION
UNITED FRESH PRODUCE ASSOCIATION
WESTERN GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

June 12, 2008

To the retail and foodservice produce-buying community:

With the good news that tomatoes from certain Florida counties and 30 other states or countries have been ruled out as the sources of the ongoing *Salmonella saintpaul* illness outbreak, we encourage you to now put those tomatoes back on your shelves and menus with confidence.

With the wellbeing of our consumers at the top of our minds, we have all worked together over the past 10 days to help the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to locate the source. FDA and CDC's very thorough epidemiological and traceback investigations have now definitively ruled out round red and Roma/plum tomatoes from most production areas, and all other types of tomatoes regardless of source. According to FDA, these tomatoes *cannot* be the source of the illnesses.

We share your interest in protecting public health, first and foremost, and our industry strives to ensure our customers receive safe and healthy produce every bite, every time. Our thoughts and prayers have been with the people who were sickened by this ordeal.

Our tomato industry and producers in these areas are ready and eager to supply you with safe and healthy tomatoes; please contact your shipper partners to place new orders today. They have already paid a high price to protect public health, and shouldn't be needlessly punished any further while the investigation is completed. Nor should our end customers be deprived any longer of safe supplies of one of the true joys of summer eating, tomatoes. Getting tomatoes back in our retail stores and on the menus is the most important step we can all take to restore consumer confidence.

We are in constant communication with the FDA in an effort to monitor this situation, which, as you know, is changing daily. If you have any questions about which tomato products and/or growing regions have been excluded from the investigation and are safe to ship, please contact us. If you would like any assistance with consumer communications, please contact your state and national organizations for assistance. We look forward to helping you put tomatoes back on the shelves, and back on the menu.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Dolan, Alliance for Food and Farming
Ed Beckman, California Tomato Farmers
Mike Stuart, Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
Reggie Brown, Florida Tomato Committee
Bryan Silbermann, Produce Marketing Association
Tom Stenzel, United Fresh Produce Association
Tom Nassif, Western Growers Association