



Questions & Answers on Romaine Lettuce Re-Entering Canadian Trade November 27, 2018

Note: A French version of this document will be forwarded upon translation.

This questions and answer document has been created using the information available from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the Public Health Association of Canada (PHAC) and knowledge of the overall discussions as of November 26, 2018. We will update the questions and answers below and make additions as we move forward. Please free to contact us with additional questions as appropriate.

- 1. What is CFIA requiring on romaine packaging imported to Canada?** CFIA is not requiring any additional information to be applied to consumer packages, commercial or food service packaging or bulk cases.
- 2. What is CFIA expecting from importers?** CFIA is requiring that importers of romaine into Canada only buy from growing areas not affected by the outbreak.
- 3. What areas are, and are not, currently affected by the outbreak?** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has identified the California Central and Northern growing areas (summer production areas) as the most likely sources of the outbreak. Other areas such as California's Imperial Valley and Riverside area, as well as Yuma, Arizona, Florida and Mexico (winter production areas) have not been identified as implicated growing areas. Importers should check the FDA site frequently for updates ([Click here to access the FDA Statement from Scott Gottlieb](#)).
- 4. What do importers need to do to verify the production areas of romaine?** Importers should have documentation from their suppliers which clearly indicates which production area romaine is coming from. This could include invoices, email or any other document which clearly states the production area. Importers should be aware that CFIA, Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) or their customers may request this information at some point.
- 5. How are consumers going to know where the product originated from?** Consumers can be directed to the CFIA website (www.inspection.gc.ca) for the most current information on the outbreak. When shopping or eating out, consumers should speak with an employee about the source of the romaine.

6. **If I currently have product which is not from the suspect areas in California, can it be shipped?** Yes. If you are sure and have some type of documentation verifying the product is not from the implicated growing areas it can be shipped.
7. **Can retailers post growing area information at the point of sale (POS)?** Yes, grocery stores may elect to post the growing or harvest information on POS material. As with all POS material, it must be kept accurate and not be misleading for consumers.
8. **Can importers request that the same information being applied to U.S. packaging be applied to product destined for Canada?** Yes, if an importer wants similar packaging changes to those being implemented in the U.S., they can make that request of their supplier. By requiring this change, the importer takes on the responsibility of ensuring the label remains compliant with Canada's labelling laws, including those unique to Quebec.
9. **When will this outbreak be over?** At this point, the government agencies in Canada and the U.S. are still investigating the individual patient cases and following the trace back leads they have gathered. It's expected that the investigations will remain open for the next few weeks.
10. **What if I ship romaine to the U.S.?** If you ship romaine to the U.S. as either a single ingredient or as part of a blend, you should refer to the [United Fresh](#) or [Produce Marketing Association's](#) Q&A's on their websites. You can also visit the FDA website or speak with a licensed import / export company.
11. **Must all points in the supply chain capture the source information?** No. Capturing the source information is the responsibility of the importer. It is suggested, however, that the importers supply this information with shipments to buyers so the buyers have the information readily at hand for consumers.

For our U.S. members or those exporting to the U.S. it is recommended that you consult the United Fresh (www.unitedfresh.org) or Produce Marketing Association (www.pma.com) websites for their current versions of their Q&A. FDA information can be found at (www.fda.gov).

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