

FLOODING

In the LGMA Metrics, Flooding is Defined as: The flowing or overflowing of a field with water outside a grower’s control that is reasonably likely to contain microorganisms of significant public health concern and is reasonably like to cause adulteration of edible portions of fresh produce in the field.

Note:

FDA considers produce (including leafy greens) that has been in contact with flood waters to be adulterated.

BEST PRACTICES FOR THREE TYPES OF FLOODING

Growers should implement the following practices if flooding occurs on their farmland:

Existing crop has come into contact with flood water	Flooding is near existing crop but there is no direct contact	For future crops where ground has been flooded
For all types of flooding the first step is to conduct a risk assessment, and then:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffer and <u>do not harvest</u> any product which has come into contact with flood waters • Buffer and <u>do not harvest</u> any product within 30 feet of the high water mark • Buffer may be increased if the need is identified through the risk assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep personnel and farm and harvest equipment away from the flooded area to avoid cross-contamination • Place markers identifying the flooding high-water line • Place markers 30 feet (or more) beyond this to allow equipment to turn outside of the flooded area • <u>Do not harvest</u> within the 30 foot buffer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate source of flood waters for potential exposure to human pathogens • Prevent cross-contamination by cleaning/sanitizing any equipment that may have contacted previously flooded soil • Allow soils to dry sufficiently (see guidelines below) and rework prior to planting

For all types of flooding document actions and maintain records for two years

After a Flooding Event: Time Intervals and Actions prior to Planting

Wait a minimum of 60 days, soil must be sufficiently dried out



Soil testing can shorten the interval to 30 days:

- Collect a representative soil sample of the entire flooded area
- Soil test results are less than 1,000 mpn/gram for fecal coliforms AND negative for Salmonella and E. coli O157:H7
- Soil Screening Guidance: Technical Background Document (US EPA 1996) provides guidance
- 3rd party environmental consultants and/or accredited labs can provide sampling services