



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Vermont's Food System Moving Beyond Irene

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**MONTPELIER** – The Vermont Agency of Agriculture and Department of Health want consumers to know that many of Vermont's fruit and vegetable farms were untouched by flood waters from Tropical Storm Irene, and Vermonters should still support their local farms and farmers' markets.

Farms that were inundated with flood waters from rivers and streams have been informed of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidance that crops in which the edible portion has come in contact with flood waters are considered to be adulterated. These crops are not to be offered for sale or consumed. Vermont farmers are aware that if these adulterated products reach the marketplace they could be subject to regulatory action from the FDA or the State of Vermont.

"We are confident in our farmer's ability to make informed decisions that will not threaten their business or the health of their community," said Agriculture Secretary Chuck Ross. "If you have questions about any food you buy locally, talk with the farmer or the market. This is another advantage of doing business with local farmers."

"Buying and eating fresh local fruit and vegetables that weren't touched by flooding is a healthy action that I encourage Vermonters to take now more than ever," said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD.

There are many ways to support Vermont farmers:

- Shop at your local farmers' market and farm stand.
- Continue to support your CSA farm during this time of need.
- Donate to the Vermont Community Foundation and Agency of Agriculture's **Farm Disaster Relief Fund** at [www.vermontcf.org](http://www.vermontcf.org).
- Donate an item or experience to Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont's (NOFA-VT) **online auction** to benefit the Farmer Emergency Fund, and participate in the auction starting October 1 at [www.nofavt.org](http://www.nofavt.org).
- If you know a farmer who has been impacted, volunteer to help muck out their barn, pull up downed fence, or even make dinner.
- If you don't know any farmers personally but would like to volunteer, call 1-800-VERMONT.

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture and the Health Department will continue to work with the FDA, UVM Extension and other partners to ensure the safety of the Vermont food supply and offer technical assistance to our farmers through this difficult time.

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