

# Food safety requirements for horticulture: berries, leafy vegetables and melons

If you grow or process berries, leafy vegetables or melons, you may be subject to new food safety standards.



Horticulture  
InfoBite

## Who are the new standards for?

A **primary horticulture producer** is a business that grows and/or harvests berries, leafy vegetables or melons.

A **primary horticulture processor** is a business that does early-stage processing of berries, leafy vegetables or melons. This includes, but is not limited to: washing, trimming, sorting, sanitising, storing, combining and packing, and transporting berries, leafy vegetables or melons between pack houses.

## Why have food safety standards been introduced for berry, leafy vegetable and melon production?

Fresh fruit and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet and horticultural produce is generally considered safe. However, foodborne illness, deaths, product recalls and other food safety incidents continue to be linked to fresh horticultural produce. Such events can be readily reduced through appropriate food safety measures.

Fresh produce contaminated by disease-causing microorganisms (pathogens) poses a health risk to consumers. Foodborne illness has been linked to fresh berries, leafy vegetables and melons, costing the Australian economy approximately \$20 million each year.

Contamination of produce can come from animals, the growing location, extreme weather events, soil, manure and composts, water, postharvest washing and sanitisation, and poor worker and equipment hygiene.

These national standards establish baseline food safety requirements for all berry, leafy vegetable and melon businesses. The standards will support nationally consistent food safety practices.

## What are the new national food safety requirements ?

The standards contain requirements including notifying authorities, product traceability, managing safety of inputs, and worker and premises hygiene.

The standards are specific to each commodity group, to address their specific food safety risks.

Refer to our InfoBite fact sheets on berries, leafy vegetables and melons for more information, and the standards for the requirements:

- [4.2.7 - Primary production and processing standard for berries](#)
- [4.2.8 - Primary production and processing standard for leafy vegetables](#)
- [4.2.9 - Primary production and processing standard for melons](#)

## When do I have to start complying with the new standards?

You will have to comply with these new food safety standards from **12 February 2025**.

Your local food regulator, industry bodies and FSANZ will have materials available before this date to help you understand what you need to do to comply.

## I grow and/or process berries, leafy vegetables or melons – what should I do?

- [Contact your state/ territory food regulatory authority](#) for more details on the requirements you must meet under the standard.
- Read more on each of the requirements in the standards and what it means for your business on our [Food Safety in Horticulture webpage](#).