

***FACT SHEET***

**FOOD SAFETY AND VEGETABLE GARDENS**

Flood water may have contaminated your vegetable or herb garden. Some garden produce may be salvaged and sanitizing, peeling and cooking is recommended to prevent food born illness.

Follow these guidelines:

- Your garden will take about a month to become clean after floodwater inundation. Don't eat or preserve food during this time.
- Discard leafy greens such as lettuce, spinach cabbage and broccoli, as well as soft berries and herbs. These are highly susceptible to bacterial contamination which is difficult to remove from them.
- Wash beans, peas, tomatoes, capsicums, zucchinis in water. Then soak in a weak chlorine solution of 2 tablespoons chlorine bleach to 4 litres of water. Peel and cook them thoroughly before eating.
- For underground vegetables such as carrots and potatoes, wash in water and sanitize as above. Peel and cook thoroughly before eating.
- Produce with a protected fruit or impervious outer skin, such as peas, melons, corn or oranges, should be washed and disinfected before the outer shell, skin or husk is removed. Then shell, peel or husk the produce and cook if possible.

For further information contact your local council, public health unit or the NSW Food Authority.

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