

Food Safety Alert – 10/03/06

Spinach is back on local shelves this week. Orders are smaller than usual while hesitant retailers try to determine the market for spinach. Salinas Valley spinach is not being stocked in Safeway stores while the investigation into the source of the E Coli outbreak are still undergoing.

<http://www.freelancenews.com/news/contentview.asp?c=196215>

Many retailers are staying away from spinach altogether until it appears that consumer fears have subsided further.

<http://www.montereyherald.com/mld/montereyherald/15666061.htm>

However, there is a glimmer of hope for Salinas Valley spinach growers. The Herald is reporting that Albertsons, which stocks Fresh Express spinach will begin selling it again this week, but will also require suppliers to provide proof that none of it has been grown by Natural Selection Foods.

In addition, the Californian is reporting that Star Market is due to received shipments of bunched spinach from Ocean Mist and Fresh Express this week. Restaurants have also started placing orders, including Hullabaloo, which buys spinach from River Ranch.

<http://www.californianonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061003/NEWS01/610030326/1002>

Joe Pezzini of Ocean Mist told the *Californian* that the company will begin harvesting 6 acre plots of spinach today and will resume bagging spinach tomorrow.

<http://www.californianonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061003/NEWS01/610030326/1002>

The Produce Marketing Association has recently started up a page on their website dealing with the outbreak. The page contains information and helpful resources and links providing information about E Coli, the status of the recent outbreak, as well as food safety procedures.

http://www.pma.com/Template.cfm?Section=Food_Safety3&CONTENTID=9922&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm

The FDA and state health officials have stated that the total number of confirmed bags of spinach tainted with the E Coli 0157:H7 virus is nine.

<http://www.californianonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061003/NEWS01/610030326/1002>

Hollister Free Lance estimates that one acre of lost spinach costs the grower \$3,500.00.

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