

To: CanadaGAP Program Participants
From: Heather Gale, National Program Manager
Date: June 27, 2012
Subject: **Stored Water Used to Flume/Wash/Cool/Rinse Product, Wash Hands, and Clean Equipment/Buildings**

Please note the following clarification of program requirements regarding water storage.

If you are filling tanks/containers/cisterns with water that will be used to flume/wash/cool/rinse product, wash hands, and clean equipment/buildings, **ongoing potability of stored water must be confirmed through water testing**. Each time the tank/container/cistern is filled, there is a risk of potential contamination (e.g., from the filling procedure, the tank/container/cistern not being clean, using a different water source, etc.). This is why two water tests for the entire season are NOT sufficient to show potability of the stored water.

The current procedures in the CanadaGAP (OFFS) manuals include:

- Fill the tank/container/cistern from a potable source
- Test the water twice – once after filling the tank/container/cistern and once more while that water is being stored to ensure potability is maintained

If you are refilling the tank/container/cistern frequently (e.g., daily) and testing is not feasible, you have other options in addition to filling the tank/cistern/container from a potable source:

- Treat the water and verify the effectiveness of treatment – refer to Section 15.3 of the CanadaGAP (OFFS) manual; **OR**
- Put in place procedures that will prevent the tank/container/cistern from becoming contaminated. You will need a procedure for filling the tank and a procedure for cleaning it at an appropriate frequency. The filling procedure must also identify the water source. You will need to test the water at least twice during the season to ensure your filling and cleaning procedures are effective.

More description around filling and cleaning procedures will be included in the 2013 version of the CanadaGAP (OFFS) manuals. For this year, further guidance is provided below. These alternative procedures will be considered as deviations from the water testing procedure that currently appears in the 2012 OFFS manuals. As always, the certification body is responsible to assess the effectiveness of your procedures.

For handwashing, if you cannot show that the potability of the stored water is maintained, other alternatives to potable water are already detailed in the OFFS manuals, including:

- (1) non-potable water, paper towels and hand sanitizer
- (2) hand wipes and hand sanitizer.

If you have any questions, please contact us at: 613-226-4880 Ext. 206 ♦ offs@hortcouncil.ca
www.canadagap.ca

Further Guidance on Water Storage Procedures for 2012

Use the following as deviation procedures for 2012. Section 15.2 of CanadaGAP (OFFS) Manuals will include the text below when the next version is formally published in 2013.

PROCEDURES:

Note: Handwashing water stored in permanent tanks within portable washrooms is not considered potable.

Annually – The person responsible records location of water storage tank/container/cistern on Form (A) Buildings Sketch (Interior Floor Plan) and Agricultural Chemical Storage Checklist OR _____

! Annually (prior to use) and monthly (during use) – The person responsible ensures that the water storage tank/cistern/container is clean by:

Cleaning Procedure (choose at least one of the following options):

- Washing with (choose at least one of the following options):
 - Water with friction (e.g. pressure wash, wiping, scrubbing)
 - Water and a sanitizer (e.g., chlorine, quaternary ammonium)
 - Water and soap

Describe your step-by-step cleaning instructions [including any soaps or sanitizers, concentrations and equipment used (refer to Appendix B: Chlorination of Water for Fluming and Cleaning Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Cleaning Equipment – An Example for examples of chlorine solutions for equipment cleaning, Appendix H: Cleaning and Treating Cisterns – An Example and Appendix N: Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) – An Example)]:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Etc.

[Filling in the above description completes your Sanitation Standard Operating Procedure (SSOP) for cleaning your water storage tank/container/cistern.]

! Annually (prior to use) and monthly (during use) – The person responsible records cleaning of water storage on Form (I) Equipment Cleaning, Maintenance and Calibration OR _____

- Each time the tank/cistern/container is filled – The person responsible ensures that:
 - A description of the step-by-step filling instructions is given for each water source used:

Identify your water source: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Etc.

[Filling in the above description completes your Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for filling your water storage tank/container/cistern. **Complete a different SOP for each water source, type of tank/container or filling mechanism.**]

- The person responsible ensures that:
 - Filling mechanism (e.g. hose) is not a source of contamination
 - Employees filling tank/cistern/containers are not a source of contamination
 - During Filling:
 - Contamination does not occur from outside sources (e.g., dirty hose, tank opening or lid not clean, etc.)
 - Tank/container/cistern must be closed immediately after filling
 - The part of the tank/container/cistern where the water is emptied from (e.g., spigot, tap, opening, etc.) is kept free from contamination.
- ! ● Regardless of water source (e.g., rain, municipal, private well water) - At least twice annually and after abnormal events – The person responsible tests water from the tank/container/cistern for Total Coliforms and *E. coli* using an accredited lab where analyses are performed to standards equivalent to ISO 17025, to ensure that the water is potable (File under Tab: Test Results). *Refer to Appendix G: Water Testing*
 - ! After cleaning, but prior to use
 - ! At least once more during the season to ensure water potability is being maintained
 - ! After abnormal events
- The person responsible ensures the water storage tank, container or cistern has a lid, is free from rust, is closed and is protected from potential contamination when not in use

