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Division of Marketing

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Water Analysis Cost Share Program

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) is pleased to announce the continuation of the Water Analysis Cost Share program. The purpose of this program is to encourage water testing as part of a pre- and post-harvest food safety program for fruit and vegetable crops. The program will assist in paying for the cost of testing irrigation and/or packing house wash water. The NCDA&CS will reimburse growers up to \$1,000.00 for laboratory analysis to determine the quantitative presence of generic *E. coli* bacteria in irrigation or wash water by a certified laboratory.

Affecting an estimated 76 million Americans annually, food safety is an important aspect of agricultural operations. Outbreaks of Salmonella and *E. Coli* have brought attention to safety programs throughout the country and increased consumer awareness of this issue.

Safe inputs, including irrigation and wash water are an important part of any food-safety program. Growers and packers are encouraged to have their water tested for generic *E. coli* as this test can provide indication of contamination with pathogens. Results from these tests can aid in tailoring a detailed and reliable food safety program for the farm/packing facility.

Funding for this program is from a USDA specialty crop block grant and is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. **To participate in this program, North Carolina growers must submit a reimbursement form along with receipts and a completed SUB NC W-9.**

Growers can be reimbursed for one water test or multiple tests throughout the year. For multiple tests please have individual receipts for each test and turn in only **one** inclusive reimbursement form for all testing throughout the growing season.

For additional information visit: <https://www.ncagr.gov/markets/NCgradesvc/index.htm> or to request an application for this program, contact Kevin Hardison at 919-707-3123 or email at Kevin.Hardison@ncagr.gov.