

How DPR helps ensure food safety (Transcript)

Do you ever wonder if there are unsafe pesticide residues on your food when you buy it at a store or farmers market?

Today, we're here to tell you about our work to collect and test thousands of fruits and vegetables each year in California to check for residues.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation, or DPR, visits grocery stores, farmers markets, bulk retailers, and other places where fruits and vegetables are sold.

Scientists collect samples of produce grown in California and the U.S., or shipped here from another country.

Samples are prepared without washing or peeling and are then tested for over 500 different pesticides or related products.

Scientists compare the results from the testing to the United States Environmental Protection Agency standard for safe tolerance.

Produce with tested levels at or below the U.S. EPA tolerance is considered safe to eat.

Over the years, DPR produce testing has shown that nearly all samples tested are below the federally set safe tolerance level.

California grown produce historically has the lowest number of tolerance violations, followed by products grown elsewhere in the U.S., and then imported produce.

But what happens when pesticide residues are detected above the safe tolerance?

DPR investigators trace the suspect crop through its lines of trade.

Contaminated products are quarantined.

In some instances, products can be cleaned well enough to be salable.

In other cases, shipments or entire crops can be ordered destroyed.

DPR works with growers and importers to explain laws and regulations to help prevent illegal pesticide residues on fruits and vegetables.

You can view all DPR's pesticide residue monitoring reports on the department's website, which is linked in the video description.

Thanks for learning more about DPR's role in food safety.