



California Tomato Farmers to Host Congressional Tour of Tomato Fields and Facilities

(July 2, 2008 – Fresno, California) The California Tomato Farmers has been asked to host a tour of its member's fields and facilities for staff members of Congressman John Dingell, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce. The California Tomato Farmers (CTF) members look forward to discussing and showing staff members their current efforts to promote food safety to protect public health. CTF members clearly recognize that food safety efforts must continue and advance as new science and information becomes available and the California Tomato Farmers also look forward to discussions on future food safety initiatives by the cooperative.

“We’re pleased that Congressman Dingell is sending his staff to California to learn first hand about tomato production, on-farm food safety efforts and trace back requirements,” says Ed Beckman, CTF president. “We hope the tour is informative and a positive learning experience for all involved.”

The California Tomato Farmers is a grower-owned cooperative formed in 2006 by farmers committed to enhanced quality, food safety and solutions to the social and environmental issues facing farmers today. As a condition of membership, CTF farmers must adhere to the cooperative’s food safety standards. Compliance with these food safety standards is verified through mandatory government audits conducted by United States Department of Agriculture inspectors. In addition to ongoing CTF programs, the cooperative has taken a leadership role in working with the Federal Food and Drug Administration, USDA, food safety scientists and our customers to develop food safety standards for fresh tomato production in the United States.

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The July 2 House Energy and Commerce Committee News Release announcing the visit to California farmers can be found on the Committee website:
<http://energycommerce.house.gov/>