



## **FDA and California Department of Public Health Announce California Tomatoes Are Not the Source of the Salmonella Outbreak**

(June 6, 2008 – Fresno, California) The FDA has announced that California tomatoes could not have been the source of the Salmonella outbreak which has caused a number of illnesses in New Mexico and Texas as well as a limited number illnesses in states including California. The official announcement by FDA was released on their website: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.html>. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has also confirmed that California tomatoes are not the source of the single Salmonella related illness in California.

While California tomatoes can continue to be purchased with confidence, it is the hope of California Tomato Farmers' members that the current investigation move quickly and aggressively to determine the outbreak source so that tomato farmers in other production areas who are not involved in the outbreak do not continue to suffer economic harm. Further, California Tomato Farmers is committed to continue to offer any assistance and information to federal health agencies which could help with the investigation.

Although California product was not involved, whenever an outbreak occurs, it is a reminder for all of us to continually review and re-examine all food safety standards on farms and at shipping points to ensure we are producing the safest food possible for consumers.

Finally, and most importantly, California Tomato Farmer members offer our sympathy and concern to those who have become ill during this recent outbreak.

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California Tomato Farmers is a cooperative formed by growers in 2006 that are committed to adhere to standards governing a number of areas including quality, food safety, worker safety and environmental stewardship. California Tomato Farmers operates under what it calls "The Fresh Standard." In its second year of operation, significant improvements have been made to The Fresh Standard with respect to food safety, the mandatory random unannounced food safety inspections by the California Department of Food and Agriculture under the authority of the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture, and worker safety. Our growers are required to adhere to these standards, including stringent requirements related to water use at all stages of production, harvest, and packing.

California Tomato Farmers is a producer owned cooperative composed of members whose fresh tomatoes are grown by or for Ace Tomato Co. Inc., The DiMare Company, Gargiulo Inc., HS Packing, Live Oak Farms, San Joaquin Tomato Growers, Oceanside Produce/Harry Singh and Sons, Pacific Triple E/Triple E Produce.