



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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*Putting Science to Work for Society
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PRESS RELEASE

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The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's (CAES) chemical surveillance of human food for pesticides and arsenic finds that 98% of tested samples are within federal tolerances

New Haven, CT –The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station is reporting that in 2017, 98% of the human food samples tested for pesticide levels were below EPA-established tolerances for residue content. The commodities tested include a wide range of fruits and vegetables including apples, a variety of berries, grapes, peaches, pears, onions, cabbage, broccoli, and artichoke, as well as a number of baby foods, spices/herbs, and juices. Of the 104 samples tested, 46 (44%) were found to contain detectable pesticide levels but only 2 (2%) had residues that exceeded EPA tolerances, a sample of fresh sage from Mexico and ground oregano from Turkey. These findings have been submitted to the CT Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for regulatory enforcement.

Separately, 24 human food samples were analyzed for total arsenic that included a variety of baby foods and juices. Twenty of these samples did not have arsenic above our reporting limit of 10 parts per billion. The remaining 4 samples contained arsenic at 15 to 518 parts per billion. All results have been submitted to CT DCP and the FDA, although there are currently no action levels for arsenic in food. According to Dr. Jason White, Vice Director of the CAES, “These findings are encouraging because they demonstrate the overall safety of food in CT. However, active surveillance programs such as that conducted by our Department of Analytical Chemistry are critical to ensuring the ongoing integrity of the food supply and for identifying emerging contaminants that may show up in the future.”

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's Department of Analytical Chemistry conducts chemical analysis on fresh and manufactured human food every year and is the only program in the State ensuring that safe levels of chemicals are present in these products. Bulletins of findings are published and freely available to the public <http://www.ct.gov/caes/cwp/view.asp?a=2826&q=455190>.

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