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Remember to Wash All Produce Before Consuming

TWIN FALLS- With a few cases of possible illness from unwashed produce, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) wants to remind the public of the importance of washing all produce before consuming it.

The public should be very aware of the dangers associated with eating unwashed fruits and vegetables, including dangerous conditions that can occur due to consuming pesticides, germs, and even organic matter. To reduce the risk of illness, produce should always be thoroughly cleaned before eating or cooking.

“People forget the importance of thoroughly washing produce before eating it. This time of year produce is plentiful and people tend to eat it right out of the fields. This is not a good idea and recently a few people have become ill from doing this,” said Cheryle Becker, Public Health Division Administrator.

There are a few easy steps to follow to ensure the produce you eat doesn’t make you sick.

- Before and after preparing fresh produce, wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water just before eating, cutting, or cooking. Using soap or detergent or any commercial produce washes are NOT recommended.
- Even if you plan to peel the produce before eating, it is still important to wash it first. Any bacteria present on the outside of items like melons can be transferred to the inside when you cut or peel them.
- Be sure to refrigerate cut or peeled fruits and vegetables within two hours after preparation.

For more information on food safety visit the SCPHD website at www.phd5.idaho.gov.

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