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contact: Marilyn Dolan or Teresa Thorne

phone: (831) 786-1666

## **NEW REPORT FINDS “DIRTY DOZEN LIST” MISLEADS CONSUMERS ABOUT DANGERS OF PESTICIDE RESIDUES**

An expert panel of toxicologists, risk assessors and nutritionists has concluded that a report concerning pesticide residues and produce, known as the *Dirty Dozen List*, is misleading to consumers, is an impediment to public health because it discourages consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and that there is no scientific evidence that pesticide levels found on produce pose any risk. Based upon these findings, there is no reason why a consumer should use this list to guide their purchasing decisions for fruits and vegetables.

More information behind these findings will be revealed July 15, when an independent report commissioned by the Alliance for Food and Farming will be made available to the media and the public. This report and corresponding efforts to provide consumers with better information regarding pesticide residues on produce was the subject of a free webinar held today for produce industry members.

“The Alliance for Food and Farming exists to provide farmers with a voice to communicate their commitment to food safety and care for the land,” said Matt McInerney, Executive Vice President for Western Growers and current chairman of the Alliance for Food and Farming. “Findings from this new report and the outreach tools surrounding its release will go a long way in helping farmers demonstrate they produce the safest food in the world and that the real danger to public health is that people are not eating enough fruits and vegetables.”

Along with the release of the report, the Alliance for Food and Farming will launch a new website devoted solely to the issue of pesticide residues on fresh produce and in assuring consumers of the safety of these healthful products. These items will also be the subject of a media webinar where reporters will be presented with findings from the independent expert panel review.

Participating in today’s industry webinar was Dr. Rick Reiss, of Exponent, Inc., who was the facilitator of the Alliance for Food and Farming’s Expert Panel Report. Dr. Reiss is an experienced environmental health scientist with expertise in risk assessment. He is currently

President of the Society for Risk Analysis. Dr. Reiss and one of the report's expert panel members, Dr. Carl Keene, Professor of Nutrition and Internal Medicine at University of California, Davis, will be on hand to present their findings to reporters during the July 15 press conference.

In addition, the Alliance for Food and Farming has turned to Elizabeth Pivonka, President and CEO, of the Produce for Better Health Foundation, to explain to reporters the challenges her organization faces in its work to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables – a difficult task without obstacles such as those promoted in the Dirty Dozen report.

“Today’s webinar, the July 15 report release and launch of the new website are just the beginnings of a renewed effort to help farmers tell the story of the care they take in growing a safe, healthy product,” said Mark Murai, President of the California Strawberry Commission and Vice Chairman of the Alliance for Food and Farming Management Board. “The website and the information we present will become a great resource for the media, consumers, retailers and the entire produce industry. “

Murai explained that the Alliance for Food and Farming is a non-profit organization which operates on voluntary contributions. Its membership includes approximately 50 agriculture associations, commodity groups and individual grower/shippers who represent farms of all sizes and includes conventional as well as organic farmers. He noted that all funding for this effort has come from farmers or groups representing farmers.

Bob Whitaker, Chief Science and Technology Officer for the Produce Marketing Association, expressed his organization’s support for the efforts of the Alliance for Food and Farming to help provide consumers with facts and information on this important issue. PMA is a member of the Alliance for Food and Farming and provided funding for the development of the new website.

The Alliance for Food and Farming is encouraging members of the produce industry to stay tuned for the official launch of this new effort on July 15. For more information on the Alliance for Food and Farming, please visit their website at [www.foodandfarming.info](http://www.foodandfarming.info).

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