

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Home Gardening

As a result of the recent flooding this spring, the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health offers the following details and recommendations to those that plant their own food gardens:

- In general, if you do not see signs of chemical contamination, such as staining or sheens, vegetation that does not look well, or notice chemical odors, then chemical contamination is not likely to be a concern.
- A minimum waiting period of 30 days after flood water is no longer present is recommended before planting edible plants.
- Tillage, sunlight, air, and soil microbiological activity over time will contribute to the breakdown of most contaminants.
- Foods intended for raw consumption, in particular leafy greens and root vegetables, are especially at risk if the recommended waiting period is not followed.
- Raised beds filled with at least 30 cm (6 inches) of soil that has not been flooded may be used as an alternative.
- Well water that may have been impacted by flooding should be tested prior to using for watering gardens.