

River Hills Harvest Post-Harvest Procedures for Fresh Elderberries

Grower Code Number: Make arrangements in advance

1. 1st number: last number of the year, e.g. 2014 = 4
2. 2nd set of numbers: Julian date, e.g. number of days in year that have passed = January 31 = 31, February 1 = 32
3. 3rd number: Assigned RHH grower number, apply through River Hills Harvest in person

Preparation:

1. Fill one sink with clean water
2. Add sanitizer and check with chlorine test strips to be sure there is 10 to 50 ppm free chlorine or other that meet the requirements
3. Record on log with time and date
4. Using this solution, wash and rinse two other sinks, surfaces the berries will touch and the de-stemmer
5. Fill rinse sinks with about six inches of clean potable water

De-stemming the berries:

1. Place stainless-steel baskets of berries in sanitized water for 15 seconds
2. Carefully agitate berries to clean them
3. Bugs, green berries and foreign matter will rise to the top; skim off debris
4. Remove each basket of berries from sanitized water; allow to drain
5. Repeat these steps in first rinse sink, then second rinse sink
6. Allow to drain until water stops pouring from the basket
7. Pack into 4-gallon square food-grade plastic berry buckets – 25 lbs. to each bucket
8. Label each bucket with Grower Code Number
9. Freeze quickly to 5° F.

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