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DATE: December 7, 2012

TO: Health Commissioners, Directors of Environmental Health and Sanitarians

RE: Heads of Leafy Greens – Updated FDA Information

Recently, the FDA updated the information we originally received regarding heads of leafy greens. The following *new* information clarifies when certain food handling practices may change a head of leafy greens from being considered a raw agricultural product (R.A.C.) to a cut leafy green that requires time/temperature control for safety.

If the butt of the core is removed by trimming; then the remaining head of lettuce/cabbage is considered to remain a raw agricultural commodity (R.A.C) and is **not** a TCS food.

Any leaves removed from the head of lettuce/cabbage (tearing off by hand, cutting off with a knife, or mechanically removing) are considered cut leafy greens and **are** a TCS food. Any intact leaves remaining on the same head and connected to the core are not considered to be cut leafy greens and are **not** a TCS food.

If the core of a head of lettuce/cabbage is completely removed (either mechanically or by hand) then the remaining leaves are considered to be cut leafy greens and **are** TCS.

Please share this information with food program sanitarians as well as retail food service and retail food establishment operators so that the code requirements are applied correctly and uniformly.

Please contact the state agencies if you have questions about this announcement.