**PROCEDURES FOR INSPECTIONS**

The Cranberry Marketing Committee (CMC) has recommended to the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA a Handler Withholding Volume Regulation for the 2017 crop year. As recommended by the CMC, all handlers will be exempt from the first 125,000 of fruit acquired from growers. Fruit acquired in excess of 125,000 barrels will have a restricted percentage of 15% applied to the fruit in excess of this minimum exemption. Excess fruit is considered restricted cranberries and is required to be disposed and destroyed or properly diverted to non-competitive markets approved by the CMC so that it does not enter the marketplace. At the handler’s discretion, a handler can meet up to 50% of its withholding obligation of restricted fruit be disposed of in any form other than whole fruit based on equivalent volumes as developed by the CMC. Disposals of excess fruit must occur by no later than August 31, 2018.

The following are the procedures for handler withholding inspections:

1. In order for a handler to receive credit for disposal of their 15% withholding obligations, handlers must submit notification no less than 7 days prior to each individual disposal to the CMC by email to mhogan@uscranberries.com and dpipher@uscranberries.com. This will allow the inspector one week to schedule a visit to the disposal site to verify the disposal.
2. All *Handler Disposal Certification* forms must be completed in full and include all the necessary information for the inspector to complete the inspection. This information includes the handler, a contact name, phone number and email address. Sections 1 (Marketable Cranberries Disposed in this Lot), 2 (Form of Disposed Cranberries), 4 (Lot Details), the Disposal Site and Lot Recipient information and the handler certification section must be also be completed. Sections 3 (Amount of Processed Cranberries in Lot) must be completed if disposal is other than whole fruit. If the handler is disposing of whole fruit, Section 5 (Lot Quality) will need to be completed. If forms are not completed in full, the form will be returned to the handler for the additional information and will delay the scheduling of the inspection.
3. As the *Handler Disposal Certification* forms are received by the CMC, they will be forwarded to the Field Inspector within the handler’s disposal location to verify the information reported.
4. The inspector will contact the handler by email or phone to set up a date within a week to verify the information on the form. It is CMC’s target to have a minimum of 75% of disposal inspections occur for each regulated handler to ensure compliance.
5. If an inspection has not occurred within a week, the handler can consider the disposal as part of their 25% that may not be verified.
6. Inspectors can request handlers to furnish creditable information and provide documentation supporting the product form disposed, the lot details and the quality test results and any other information needed. If product is being disposed at a landfill, composting, incineration, or wastewater treatment facility or any other site, the inspector may request receipts, visual proof or additional information to support the disposal as reported on the ***Handler Disposal Certification*** form.
7. Upon verification of the whole fruit, 50 Brix Concentrate, Low Brix Juice, Dried Cranberries or any other form of cranberry product disposal as noted on Section 2 of the ***Handler Disposal Certification*** form, the field inspector will sign the certification section of the ***Handler Disposal Certification*** form and return it to the CMC office for recording.
8. If a disposal can’t be verified by the inspector resulting in an adverse determination for the handler by the CMC, the handler may complete a ***Handler Withholding Appeal*** form and submit all documentation to support an appeal within 30 days after notification of this determination from the CMC. This appeal will be reviewed by an appeals subcommittee. If the handler is not satisfied with the appeals subcommittee’s decision, the handler may further appeal to the Secretary within 15 days after notification of the subcommittee’s findings.
9. All ***Handler Disposal Certification*** forms will be collected through August 1, 2018. The CMC will total all marketable cranberries disposed for each regulated handler to ensure the information is consistent with the information reported on the ***Final Hander Withholding Report*** due to the CMC by August 31, 2018.
10. Inspectors will be paid at the rate of $175 per day and will be reimbursed all expenses incurred while conducting CMC inspections, as approved by the Executive Director. All inspection costs will be the responsibility of the handler. If inspections can be coordinated for several handlers on a specific day, the expenses for that day’s inspections will be divided equally between the handlers. CMC will track all inspection costs for each handler and each handler will be billed after September 1, 2018 for the inspection expenses incurred during the 2017 crop year.