



J.O. SIMS L^{td}

Est. 1896

26th March 2008

Dear Customer,

From Sunday 23rd March our communication systems here at J.O.Sims have been clogged up with enquiries from concerned customers regarding the reporting of a Salmonella outbreak in the USA. This alert was instigated by the FDA who mention the source of the outbreak as being cantaloupe melons from Honduras.

Since then, we have, with the help of our friends at Agrolibano, Honduras, conducted an investigation into the source of this alert and any evidence that the FDA have to support their claims.

We have concluded that there is no direct evidence to link the Salmonella outbreak with cantaloupe melons from Honduras.

The FDA cannot produce a single positive Salmonella test result for Honduran cantaloupes – the only link is a very tenuous trace-back based on just two incidents, one in Washington State from a fresh-cut processor and the second in a buffet restaurant in Salt Lake City. The trace-back evidence is questionable and weak because it does not provide any scientific proof that the source of contamination is from cantaloupe melons. We have just received the first tests for a container held by the FDA which has proved negative. There are still many containers being held by the FDA which will be tested in due course.

As a result of their action, the melon trade in the USA has collapsed to such a degree that the future of Agrolibano is now in question – threatening the livelihood of five thousand families employed in the South of Honduras. The President of Honduras has now become involved and representations are being made to the US Government at the highest level.

Based on the available evidence, our knowledge and trust in Agrolibano and our working relationship with the Company we have concluded that the FDA has massively over reacted to the situation and have found Agrolibano guilty by association – there is to date not a shred of scientific evidence.

We have sampled for Salmonella testing all melon lots that we have on site and results will be available on 31st March. We feel confident that the results will be negative.

In the meantime we would ask that you examine the evidence and based on this we would ask that you support Agrolibano in their time of need.

Yours sincerely

Dr David J Smith
Technical Director.