

AU researchers using salty solution to kill bacteria on veg crops

Cleaning vegetables while they are still growing in the field may sound like an odd idea, but South Australian researchers are verifying its value.

The University of SA team is using the same technology used in saltwater swimming pools to create chlorinated irrigation water that can be sprayed onto crops to kill off unwanted microbes.

“One of the biggest flower importers into Australia is using this technique, spraying his flowers to extend their shelf life,” university environmental science and engineering professor Enzo Lombi said.

The technology involves using the naturally occurring low levels of chloride salts in water, or adding more if needed in the form of potassium chloride, to kill off bacteria on vegetables.

Professor Lombi said that while the simple technique was being used for post-harvest treatment of foods, Hort Innovation Australia was funding his team to see if they could cut the microbial load on standing crops before harvest.

Hort Innovation chief executive John Lloyd said it could save vegetable growers time and money beyond minimising product losses through food recalls.

Lien article : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/179110/AU-researchers-using-salty-solution-to-kill-bacteria-on-veg-crops>