

Permit Compliance Inspection Report

Water Quality Program

Central Region Office

A. General Information

Facility Name & Address: Snow and Sons Produce Co
521 Wellner Rd
Outlook, WA 98938

Permit Type: N/A Permit Number: N/A

Permit Effective Dates: N/A

Date of Inspection: 4/22/2024

Inspection Duration: 10:38 AM to 12:23 PM

Discharge to: Groundwater

Type of Inspection: Announced
Technical Assistance Visit

Photographs Taken: ☒ Yes ☐ No Samples Taken: ☐ Yes ☒ No

B. Personnel Information

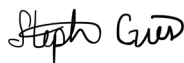
Ecology Representative(s): Stephanie Giesin – Permit Developer/Permit Manager (Lead Inspector)
Matt Durkee - Hydrogeologist

Facility Representative(s): Samantha Taylor - Office Manager
Luke Thomas - Manager
Phone: 509-837-5366 Email: office@snowflight.net

Responsible Party/Official: Steven Thomas
521 Wellner Rd
Outlook, WA 98938
Phone: 509-837-5366 Email:N/A

Inspector Signature(s)

Management QA Reviewer Signature



5/10/2024

Stephanie Giesin (Author)
Permit Developer/Permit Manager

Date



5/13/2024

Andrea Jedel
Industrial Unit Supervisor

Date

C. Facility Description & Background

The purpose of this inspection was to review the facility's State Waste Discharge (SWD) Permit application which had unresolved questions from comments provided by Ecology and for Matt Durkee, our hydrogeologist, to observe the wastewater lagoon at the facility and provide his groundwater expertise. Snow and Sons Produce Co. was issued a temporary SWD permit on July 19, 2001, for processing fresh-cut asparagus and fresh-picked sweet corn. Later, their permit was canceled on August 5, 2003. Erik Van Doren and I (Stephanie Giesin) inspected the facility on February 2, 2021, to determine permit applicability, and provided a permit application. Currently, the facility processes brined cherries and discharges their wastewater and stormwater to a lagoon and land apply their wastewater.

D. Inspection Narrative & Observations

Matt and I arrived at the facility at 10:38 AM and went into the office. We met Samantha at the front desk and I asked if Scott was available for our meeting. Samantha said he had an emergency that he needed to step out for, and that Luke would be joining us. We went upstairs into a conference room and waited for Luke. We did introductions with Luke and Matt went over a brief history with their recent application and their temporary permit that was canceled. Matt explained the SWD permit application discharge to ground and went over their application to explain information that we still need for a complete application. They have not sampled their wastewater that goes to an unlined lagoon. We need analytical data for the wastewater that discharges to the lagoon. They have soil analytical data that they submitted with their application. Luke said they mix irrigation water with the brine water that discharges to the lagoon. Matt said brine water should not be applied to the ground. Luke said they have had success with the crops in the fields where they land apply their wastewater via irrigation. We would need to know how much they are diluting as that would be important for determining wastewater loading. Other facilities often do a 50/50 dilution with irrigation water and their wastewater.

Samantha said they do not have a water meter, so to calculate the gallons per month they discharge, she googled what the average water hose discharges. She also applied this to the wastewater irrigated to the field.

Matt discussed the need to hire an environmental consultant to help them determine the best options for their wastewater discharges given it is to groundwater. Matt said he could follow up with the facility on what parameters they would need to sample for. We discussed the option to truck their wastewater offsite, but Matt said that would be expensive and not the most feasible option for a smaller facility. Installing a double-lined lagoon with leak detection has a greater upfront cost, but with this option, they would not be required to have a SWD Permit. The lagoon could be double or single lined and the existing sprayfield irrigation to the field. An engineering report is required for any facility doing new construction related to industrial wastewater discharges. Engineering reports and plans must be approved by Ecology prior to construction. Matt explained that there are Washington Administrative Codes (WACs) that address these regulation requirements for engineering reports, operations and maintenance (O&M) manuals and we could provide them with that information.

Matt also went over the temporary permit process and plan submittal requirements that would be written into a permit like an irrigation crop management plan. For their facility, that would likely be once per permit cycle, which is every five years.

For a wastewater lagoon, we would want to know how much water is going into the lagoon and how much water is going to irrigate the field. These values would be measured with a flow meter.

1. Site Walkthrough

Samantha and Luke took us outside to observe the process of brined cherries. The sizer processes brine cherries and they brine for about a year. Samantha said the minimum brine time before processing is about 6-8 weeks. After the cherries are brined, it takes the rest of the year for them to be sized and pitted. All the water from this processing area including stormwater goes through a drain that is piped to the lagoon.

We walked back to the lagoon and saw the irrigation sprinklers to the field in the distance. The wastewater enters the lagoon on the east side and irrigation water piped in on the west side of the lagoon. Matt said we would need to meter the irrigation water to know how much the brine water is being diluted. We would also need to know the total acreage for the land application. Samantha said they have sampled their wells in the past and Matt said that would be good information to have with their permit application. Samantha also said she could sample their wastewater and take it to the lab for analysis. Matt said he would provide the parameters we would need to complete that section of their permit application.

We thanked them for their time and I provided my business card to Samantha. We left the facility at 12:23 PM.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this inspection report, please contact Stephanie Giesin at 509-504-0172 or stephanie.giesin@ecy.wa.gov.

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Photo 1 [IMG_0380]
Description: Sizer processing brined cherries



Photo 2 [IMG_0382]
Description: Drain that collects stormwater and process water from sizer – goes to the lagoon



Photo 3 [IMG_0384]
Description: Unlined wastewater lagoon that contains brine water and stormwater also diluted with irrigation water



Photo 4 [IMG_0386]
Description: Irrigation water pipe into the lagoon



Photo 5 [IMG_0387]
Description: Land application via irrigation in the field



Photo 6 [IMG_0388]
Description: Another view of the irrigation field



Photo 7 [IMG_0389]
Description: Stormwater collecting near the entrance to the facility – pipes used to distribute water through system to the lagoon