



Government of the Virgin Islands
of the United States

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DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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DLCA COMMENDS VIGILANT CONSUMERS
ON REPORTING SPOILED FOOD

Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs Commissioner Designee Devin Carrington today commended consumers that recently made reports to the VI Consortium online website regarding spoiled food items being sold by the Cost-U-Less retailer on St. Croix. The consumers took photos of the spoiled items and emailed them to the Consortium.

Based on the reports and photos, VI Consortium conducted an on-site investigation of the wholesaler and found countless spoiled items in the produce section. What is even more concerning, stated Carrington, is that the Consortium, after receiving the reports in early March, did its own investigation a few days later and the spoiled items were still on the shelf. This is completely unacceptable Carrington said, adding that Virgin Islands consumers deserve to spend their hard earned money on quality produce and fresh food items. There is no reason why our consumers should be treated any differently than consumers on the mainland where this company is headquartered.

Carrington added, while the Virgin Islands Code assigns the regulation of the quality of food items on the shelf to the Department of Health-Division of Environmental Health, the role of the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs is to ensure that a licensee does not allow or permit in the licensed establishment any improper or wrongful behavior of a substantial character and of public concern. This situation is most certainly wrongful and of public concern, Carrington said. Based on these reports, the department shall do its investigation and take appropriate action against the establishment as provided by law, the commissioner stated. Where fines are warranted, the licensee shall pay, Carrington said.

Carrington added, I am a firm believer and have repeatedly said that consumers are the most powerful force in combatting improper and wrongful acts by businesses. Consumers, he said, are the department's eyes and ears in the marketplace especially given the shortage of personnel and the department's inability to perform inspections as often as needed. Bad publicity is a powerful incentive the commissioner added, and the Consortium must be commended for making the general public aware of bad business practice. The commissioner reiterated that consumers must use all means of publicity available but urged that they send pictures and make reports directly to the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs. Pictures and reports can be sent to the following email address: info@dlca.vi.gov. The commissioner informs the public that the department will soon develop a Facebook page where such reports and photos can be posted for direct access by department's inspectors and enforcement officers. For any other information or to make reports consumers may still visit DLCA offices or call 714.3522 on St. Thomas or 713.3522 on St. Croix.

PRESS RELEASE



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