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Novazone working to make food safer

It's amazing what adding one little atom to a molecule can do.

Novazone Inc. uses this three-atom oxygen molecule, called ozone, to sanitize freshly harvested produce without exposing it to disinfecting chemicals, like chlorine, that still are commonly used. Because the extra oxygen atom is unstable, it breaks loose from the usual two-atom oxygen molecule, attaches itself to bacteria and pathogens, and kills them.

While there are any number of industries that could, and do, benefit from using this environmentally sensitive technology, Novazone two years ago decided to focus its efforts on the \$3.3 billion food science market, particularly organic food growers. In the wake of this summer's spinach e. coli scare, the move appears downright prescient.

Besides sanitizing fresh produce, Novazone's roughly \$100,000 systems also can reduce decay and control ripening of fresh produce, improve food and water quality and extend overall shelf life.

Known as "nature's disinfectant," ozone can destroy a variety of pathogens, including mold, bacteria and viruses without exposing foods to chemicals.

So far, that has translated into sales to some of America's largest food suppliers, including Sun Pacific, Orchard View Farms, Paramount Farms, Safeway, Coca-Cola, Pepsi Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, Procter & Gamble and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

"We've worked hard to develop and deploy highly effective and economical clean technology solutions for food and water for our worldwide customers," says David Cope, president and CEO of Novazone, Inc. "Food and water safety has become a global concern."