CLAIMS

1. An antimicrobial wash consisting of water, hydrogen peroxide, one or more fruit acids and lactic acid.

2. The antimicrobial wash of claim 1, wherein the fruit acid is one or more of malic acid, citric acid, tartaric acid and mandelic acid.

3. The antimicrobial wash of claim 2, wherein the fruit acid is citric acid.

4. The antimicrobial wash of claim 2, wherein the antimicrobial wash consists of water, 0.02-0.20% H_2O_2, 0.05-1.0 wt. % fruit acid and 0.005-0.15 wt. % lactic acid, and further wherein the lactic acid/fruit acid ratio in the antimicrobial wash is 0.02-2.0, the H_2O_2/fruit acid ratio in the antimicrobial wash is 0.04-1.0, and the H_2O_2/lactic acid ratio in the antimicrobial wash is 0.4-7.5.

5. The antimicrobial wash of claim 4, wherein the fruit acid is citric acid.

6. A process for treating a fresh fruit or vegetable to reduce microbial contamination of the surface of the fresh fruit or vegetable, the process comprising contacting the surface of the fresh fruit or vegetable with an antimicrobial wash consisting of water, hydrogen peroxide, one or more fruit acids and lactic acid.

7. The process of claim 6, wherein the process is carried out on multiple batches of fresh fruit and/or fresh vegetables, and further wherein the antimicrobial wash used to treat at least one of these batches is recycled for reuse in treating at least another of these batches.

8. The process of claim 6, wherein the fruit acid is one or more of malic acid, citric acid, tartaric acid and mandelic acid.

9. The process of claim 8, wherein the fruit acid is citric acid.

10. The process of claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial wash consists of water, 0.02-0.20% H_2O_2, 0.05-1.0 wt. % fruit acid and 0.005-0.15 wt. % lactic acid, and further wherein the lactic acid/fruit acid ratio in the antimicrobial wash is 0.02-2.0, the H_2O_2/fruit acid ratio in the antimicrobial wash is 0.04-1.0, and the H_2O_2/lactic acid ratio in the antimicrobial wash is 0.4-7.5.

11. The process of claim 10, wherein the fruit acid is citric acid.

12. An antimicrobial wash consisting of water, 1-35 wt. % hydrogen peroxide, one or more fruit acids in an amount such that the H_2O_2/fruit acid ratio in this antimicrobial wash is 0.02-4.0, and lactic acid in an amount such that the H_2O_2/lactic acid ratio in this antimicrobial wash is 0.1-40.

13. The antimicrobial wash of claim 12, wherein the fruit acid is citric acid.