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DT: August 23, 2012

TO: Health Commissioners, Directors of Environmental Health and Interested Parties

RE: Recall Announcement (ODA/ODH) 2012-078

FDA announces recall of cantaloupe by Chamberlain Farms of Owensville Indiana

Farm's cantaloupe may be one source of contamination in multi-state outbreak of salmonellosis

Fast facts

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is announcing a recall of cantaloupe by Chamberlain Farms, of Owensville, Indiana, because of possible contamination with Salmonella Typhimurium associated with a multi-state outbreak of salmonellosis. The FDA is warning consumers not to eat and to discard cantaloupe from this farm.
- After officials from the FDA, CDC and the state of Indiana briefed Chamberlain Farms on the current status of the investigation, Chamberlain Farms made the decision to recall its cantaloupe from the market place.
- The investigation into this outbreak continues in order to determine whether there are other possible sources of the outbreak.
- Records available currently indicate that this product was initially shipped to Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Ohio, Illinois, and Wisconsin, although further shipment was likely.

What is the problem?

The FDA is announcing a recall of cantaloupe by Chamberlain Farms, of Owensville, Indiana, because of possible contamination with Salmonella Typhimurium associated with a multi-state outbreak of salmonellosis.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports a total of 178 persons infected with the outbreak strain of Salmonella Typhimurium from 21 states. Nationwide, 62 persons have been hospitalized. In Kentucky, two deaths have been reported.

The investigation into this outbreak continues, in order to determine whether there are other possible sources of the outbreak.

What are the symptoms of salmonellosis?

Most people infected with Salmonella develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.

However, in some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. In these patients, the Salmonella infection may spread from the intestines to the

blood stream, and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics.

Who is at risk?

Children are the most likely to get salmonellosis. The rate of diagnosed infections in children less than five years old is higher than the rate in all other persons. Young children, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems are the most likely to have severe infections. It is estimated that approximately 400 persons die each year with acute salmonellosis.

Where was the cantaloupe distributed?

Records available currently indicate that the cantaloupe was initially shipped to Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Ohio, Illinois, and Wisconsin although further shipment was likely. The FDA urges consumers in any state who are buying or have recently bought cantaloupe to ask their retailers if the cantaloupe was grown on Chamberlain Farms of Owensville, Indiana.

What is being done about the problem?

After officials from the FDA and the state of Indiana briefed Chamberlain Farms on the current status of the investigation, Chamberlain Farms made the decision to recall its cantaloupe from the market place.

Earlier Chamberlain Farms had agreed to withdraw the cantaloupe from the market, and to cease distributing cantaloupes for the rest of the growing season. However, the decision to formally recall the product will facilitate removal of the product from the market and ensure the widest possible awareness of this action.

The investigation into this outbreak continues, in order to determine whether there are other possible sources. FDA's Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation (CORE) network is working directly with the FDA field offices, the CDC and state and local agencies on this incident and will continue to update the public appropriately.

What do consumers need to do?

Consumers who are buying or have recently bought cantaloupe should ask their retailers if the cantaloupe was grown on Chamberlain Farms of Owensville, Indiana. The FDA warns consumers not to eat this cantaloupe, and if they have purchased it, they should throw it away.

If consumers believe they have cantaloupe from this farm, they should not try to wash the harmful bacteria off the cantaloupe as contamination may be both on the inside and outside of the cantaloupe. Cutting, slicing and dicing may also transfer harmful bacteria from the fruit's surface to the fruit's flesh. When in doubt, throw it out.

Who should be contacted?

Consumers who show any signs of illness from salmonellosis should consult their health care provider. The FDA encourages consumers with questions about food safety to call 1-888-SAFEFOOD or consult the fda.gov website.

The information in this press release reflects the FDA's best efforts to communicate what it has learned from the manufacturer and the state and local public health agencies involved in the investigation. The agency will update the public as more information becomes available.