

Crisis Control Newsletter

Crisis Control Newsletter from RQA, Inc.—A Catlin Preferred Provider to Foodservice, Food Processing and Consumer Products Industries

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Surveillance Systems Track Foodborne Illness

There are several different surveillance systems used in the United States and Canada that provide information on the occurrence of foodborne illnesses. Similar methodologies are used in both countries to estimate the burden of foodborne illness. In the US, this information is tracked by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and relies on the data from state and local health agencies. In Canada, this information is tracked by the Public Health Agency of Canada and relies on data from provincial/territorial and local public health ministries/units/authorities. Based on the data provided, the total overall estimate is that one in six Americans and one in eight Canadians will experience foodborne illness each year.

Each surveillance system plays a role in detecting and preventing foodborne disease and outbreaks. These systems focus on specific pathogens likely to be transmitted through food to detect outbreaks, monitor trends and risk factors. More recently, new surveillance methods have emerged which improve the quality, quantity, and timeliness of data. These more specific estimates can further inform policy and regulatory priorities to prevent future illnesses. Some of these surveillance systems are as follows:

Canada:

Canadian Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (CNDSS)
Collects the number of laboratory confirmed illnesses reported to local public health units/regions to provincial public health authorities and to the national level on an annual basis.

National Enteric Surveillance Program (NESP)
Collects detailed case level data from invasive listeriosis cases in participating provinces.

Enhanced National Listeriosis Surveillance
Collects aggregate counts of laboratory isolates of select enteric pathogens (species and subtype) reported through the provincial laboratories on a weekly basis.

Provincial Reportable Disease Surveillance System
Collects the number of laboratory confirmed illnesses reported from local public health units/regions to provincial public health authorities only.

National Studies on Acute Gastrointestinal Illness (NSAGI) Population Surveys
Population surveys asking Canadians about vomiting and diarrhea.

FoodNet Canada Surveillance
An integrated enteric pathogen surveillance system based on a sentinel site surveillance model that collects information on both cases of infectious gastrointestinal illness and sources of exposure within defined communities. Provides detailed case information on clinical illness and risk factors.

PulseNet
National Molecular Subtyping Network for Foodborne Disease Surveillance that is responsible for data collection and analysis, surveillance, foodborne disease outbreak detection and response, and for coordinating communication among the PulseNet Canada member laboratories.

Canadian Integrated Program for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance (CIPARS)
Monitors trends in antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance in selected bacterial organisms from human, animal and food sources across Canada.

Continued:

United States:

FoodNet
FoodNet conducts population-based surveillance for seven bacterial and two parasitic infections transmitted commonly through food, and it conducts analyses and epidemiologic studies designed to help public health officials better understand the epidemiology of foodborne diseases in the United States. FoodNet data provides insights into the incidence of and trends in foodborne and diarrheal diseases.

National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System—enteric bacteria (NARMS)
NARMS conducts surveillance for antimicrobial resistance among foodborne bacteria in humans, retail meat, and animals. NARMS enhances collaboration among public health and agricultural agencies to detect, respond, and prevent antimicrobial resistance among foodborne bacteria.

National Electronic Norovirus Outbreak Network (CaliciNet)
This network compares norovirus sequences to be able to rapidly link norovirus outbreaks with a common food source as well as to identify emerging norovirus strains.

National Molecular Subtyping Network for Foodborne Disease Surveillance (PulseNet)
PulseNet allows investigators from participating sites to upload pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) patterns to an electronic database and compare them with patterns of other pathogens isolated from humans, animals, and foods to identify matches and possible linkages between pathogens.

National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)
In notifiable disease surveillance, health care providers and laboratory professionals are required by law to report individual cases of disease when selected pathogens are identified in patient specimens or specific clinical syndromes are recognized.

National Outbreak Reporting System (NORS)
State, local, and territorial public health agencies report foodborne outbreaks due to enteric bacterial, viral, parasitic, and chemical agents through NORS. The NORS surveillance team conducts analyses of these data to improve understanding of the human health impact of foodborne outbreaks and the pathogens, foods, settings, and contributing factors involved in these outbreaks.

Environmental Health Specialists Network, or EHS-Net
Investigators from state and local public health agencies gather information about contributing factors in foodborne outbreaks through environmental assessments conducted by food control officials and report the results to CDC.

Public Health Laboratory Information System (PHLIS)
An electronic reporting system, to transmit reports of *Salmonella* and *Shigella* isolates from human sources.

Sources: United States CDC., Public Health Agency of Canada

Food and Drug Administration Recalls (www.fda.gov)

Product: Ice Cream, Gelato, Custard & Sorbet
Incident: Possible Health Risk–*Listeria monocytogenes*

A Maltby, WA firm is voluntarily recalling all ice cream, gelato, custard and sorbet for all flavors and container sizes produced on or after January 1, 2014 through December 15, 2014 because these products have the potential to be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. The recalled products were distributed in AZ, ID, CA, OR, WA and my have been further distributed and sold in various retail outlets in AK, CO, MT, NV, NM, ND, TX, UT and WY. The recall was initiated based on the positive result of *Listeria monocytogenes* in the samples collected within the production facility and analyzed by Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). The Washington State Department of Health (WSDH) confirmed two people have been hospitalized in Seattle with *Listeria* infections linked to the recalled ice cream. Consumers who have purchased the recalled products should destroy or return them to the place of purchase for a full refund.

Product: Nutrition Bars
Incident: Possible Health Risk–*Salmonella*

A San Diego, CA firm is recalling specific lot numbers of its peanut butter and cranberry crunch flavor nutrition bars due to potential *Salmonella* contamination. The recall was initiated after routine finished product testing. While no illnesses have been associated with any of the recalled products, *Salmonella* bacteria can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people and others with weakened immune systems. The recalled product has reached the distributor, retail and end user level. Some products may have been purchased through the company's online store. The affected distributors and retail partners have been notified to remove and destroy the potentially contaminated products from store shelves and warehouses. Consumers that have purchased the potentially contaminated product are urged not consume it and should dispose of it and its container. Consumers with questions should contact the company directly.

United States Department of Agriculture Recalls (www.usda.gov)

Product: Bacon Products
Incident: Possible Health Risk–Misbranding

A Palatka, FL establishment is recalling approximately 80,050 pounds of various hickory smoked sliced bacon products due to misbranding. The 10-lb. bulk frozen packages of bacon were produced between July 23 and December 11, 2014 and were shipped to distributors in FL and GA. The problem was discovered by FSIS inspection personnel during a label review. The product ingredient sodium nitrite is not declared on the product label. FSIS and the company have not received any reports of adverse reactions or illness due to consumption of these products. FSIS routinely conducts effectiveness checks to verify recalling firms notify their customers of the recall and that steps are taken to make certain that the product is no longer available to consumers. Media and consumers with questions in regards to the recall should contact the company's Plant Manager.

Product: Spicy Sausage Pasta
Incident: Possible Health Risk–Misbranding

A Rocklin, CA establishment is recalling approximately 2,719 pounds of spicy sausage products due to misbranding. The 5-oz. foil laminated pouches containing spicy sausage pasta products were produced on various dates from June 14 through November 13, 2014. The products subject to recall were shipped to retail locations nationwide. The problem was discovered by a FSIS inspection personnel during a label review. The label indicates that the product contains beef, but is actually formulated with pork sausage. Pork is not indicated on the label. FSIS and the company have not received any reports of adverse reactions or illness associate with consumption of these products. Media and consumers with questions in regard to the recall should contact the company's General Manager.

Consumer Product Safety Commission Recalls (www.cpsc.gov)

Product: Brewing System
Incident: Possible Risk-Burn Hazard

A Waterbury, VT importer is recalling approximately 6.6 million units of brewing systems (564,000 units in Canada). The recalled brewing systems are single-serve, hot beverage brewers and were sold in 13 different colors with silver trim. The recalled brewers have three cup size brewing options and a removable drip tray. The water tank is located on top of the unit towards the back. Water can overheat during brewing, spray out and burn consumers. Recalled units were manufactured in China and Malaysia and produced between December 2009 and July 2014. The brewers were sold at retailers nationwide and online from December 2009 through December 2014. The company has received 200 reports of hot liquid escaping from the brewer, including 90 reports of burn-related injuries. Consumers should contact the company to receive a free repair. Consumers with questions should contact the company or visit their website.

Product: Stadium Seats
Incident: Possible Risk-Injury Hazard

A Higganum, CT company is recalling approximately 6,000 units of stadium seats (9 units in Canada). The seats are made of a powder-coated steel frame, a stitched fabric backrest and a fabric-covered padded bottom. The backrest has a mesh pocket on the back side. The seat bottom has a strap that runs from one side through two D rings on the upper part of the backrest and back down the other side. The strap has a yellow buckle. The backrest can fail, posing a risk of injury. The seats were manufactured in China and sold at sporting goods retailers nationwide and online from January 2013 to August 2014. The company has received a report of one incident where backrest support failed and the consumer fell to the ground from the top of a 4-foot tall bleacher and suffered neck and back injuries. Consumers should contact the company for a free strap repair kit or visit their website for additional information.

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