



NEWS

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Illinois Department of Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Health Alert – Multistate Salmonella Outbreak Linked to Cantaloupes from Southwest Indiana

141 persons from 20 states affected; 17 cases in Illinois

CHICAGO –The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is alerting the public to an outbreak of *Salmonella Typhimurium* linked to cantaloupes grown on one farm in southwestern Indiana. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is collaborating in an ongoing multistate investigation to identify all possible sources of contamination and prevent additional cases of illness.

A total of 141 people in 20 states have been infected with *Salmonella*, associated with this outbreak, with illness onset dates ranging from July 7, 2012 to August 4, 2012. Among the 17 reported Illinois cases—representing 11 counties—eight people have been hospitalized.

CDC and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are continuing to investigate, and as a result of the initial investigations, cantaloupe grown in southwestern Indiana is a likely source of this outbreak.

“Illinois consumers should check for and ask about the origin of recently purchased cantaloupe, and discard any cantaloupe grown in southwestern Indiana,” said IDPH Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck. “Anyone who becomes ill after eating cantaloupes grown in southwestern Indiana should seek medical attention immediately.”

Many cantaloupes have the growing area identified with a sticker on the fruit—if the sticker indicates the cantaloupe was grown in southwestern Indiana, discard it immediately. If no sticker is present, consumers should contact the store where they purchased cantaloupe to ask about its origin.

Signs and Symptoms

Most people infected with *Salmonella* bacteria 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, for some people, diarrhea may be so severe that the person requires hospitalization. Older adults, infants, and those with impaired immune systems are more likely to

have a severe illness from *Salmonella* infection. Among these and other high-risk groups, *Salmonella* infection may spread and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics.

Recommendations

IDPH recommends that consumers discard any recently purchased cantaloupe grown in southwestern Indiana, and to seek medical attention immediately if exhibiting any symptoms of *Salmonella* infection. Retailers and food service operators should not sell or serve cantaloupe from southwestern Indiana.

Additionally, the FDA recommends consumers routinely rinse raw produce such as fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running tap water before eating, cutting or cooking. Even if the produce will be peeled, it should still be washed first. Scrub firm produce such as melons and cucumbers with a clean produce brush. Dry the produce with a clean cloth or paper towel. Separate uncooked meats and poultry from vegetables, cooked foods and ready-to-eat foods to avoid cross contamination.

For more information on *Salmonella* and updates on the current investigation, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/typhimurium-cantaloupe-08-12/index.html>

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