

News Release



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***Salmonella* cases linked to raw, frozen chicken entrees**

Consumers urged to cook raw chicken products thoroughly

ST. PAUL, Minn. – State health and agriculture officials said today that six recent cases of salmonellosis in Minnesota have been linked to raw, frozen, breaded and pre-browned, stuffed chicken entrees. The implicated product is Antioch Farms brand A La Kiev raw stuffed chicken breast with a U.S. Department of Agriculture stamped code of P-1358. This product is sold at many different grocery store chains.

Investigators from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) determined that six cases of *Salmonella* infection from August and September 2014 were due to the same strain of *Salmonella* Enteritidis. One person was hospitalized for their illness.

“Our DNA fingerprinting found that the individuals were sickened by the same strain of *Salmonella*,” said Dr. Carlota Medus, epidemiologist for the Foodborne Diseases Unit at MDH. “The Minnesota Department of Agriculture collected samples of the same type of product from grocery stores and the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* was found in packages of this product.”

There have been six outbreaks of salmonellosis in Minnesota linked to these types of products from 1998 through 2008. This is the first outbreak since improvements were made in 2008 to the labeling of these products. The current labels clearly state that the product is raw.

Salmonella is sometimes present in raw chicken, which is why it is important for consumers to follow safe food-handling practices. This includes cooking all raw poultry products to an internal temperature of at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit. “The problem arises when consumers don’t realize that they are handling and preparing a raw product,” according to Dr. Carrie Rigdon, an investigator for the MDA Dairy and Food Inspection Division.

MDA and MDH officials advised that consumers with these products in their freezers, if they choose to use them, should cook them thoroughly. Other important food handling practices include hand washing before and after handling raw meat, keeping raw and cooked foods separate to avoid cross-contamination, and placing cooked meat on a clean plate or platter before serving. Consumers can find more information about safe food-handling practices on the MDH website at: www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety

Symptoms of salmonellosis include diarrhea, abdominal pain and cramps and fever. Symptoms usually begin within 12 to 72 hours after exposure, but can begin up to a week after exposure. *Salmonella* infections usually resolve in 5 to 7 days, but approximately 20 percent of cases require hospitalization. In rare cases, *Salmonella* infection can lead to death, particularly in the elderly or those with weakened immune systems.

Approximately 700 cases of salmonellosis are reported each year in Minnesota.

More information on *Salmonella* and how to prevent it can be found on the MDH website at www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/salmonellosis/index.html

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