



Environmental
Health

County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

Advisory	Update On Salmonellosis Outbreak in Certain Types of Tomatoes
Principal Investigator:	John Hodges
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INCIDENT

- The U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is advising consumers nationwide that a salmonellosis outbreak appears to be linked to consumption of certain types of raw red tomatoes and products containing raw red tomatoes. The bacteria causing the illnesses are *Salmonella* serotype Saintpaul, an uncommon type of *Salmonella*.
- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) confirmed today that one resident of Contra Costa County has *Salmonella* serotype Saintpaul, and that this illness may be related to the multistate outbreak associated with consumption of tomatoes. State and local officials are investigating whether the individual, who had traveled out of state, consumed the tomatoes in California or in another part of the country
- FDA has no indication that tomatoes grown in California are associated with this outbreak.
- Consumers, especially young children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems, are susceptible to serious infection when exposed to *Salmonella*.
- *Salmonella* is a microorganism that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACTION

- At this time, there are no known reports of Santa Cruz County residents with a confirmed or a suspected case of salmonellosis caused by *Salmonella* serotype Saintpaul bacteria. The Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency (HSA) will continue to monitor this outbreak and will provide additional updates if warranted. Local physicians and health care providers are requested to collect stool samples from symptomatic patients for typing, and may contact the HSA Communicable Disease Unit for assistance and additional information.



Public Health
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- **Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
- **Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
- **Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Division is advising consumers to observe safe food handling practices with all fresh produce, especially with tomatoes. This includes:
 - Refrigerate within 2 hours or discard cut, peeled, or cooked tomatoes.
 - Avoid purchasing bruised or damaged tomatoes and discard any that appear spoiled.
 - Thoroughly wash all tomatoes under running water.
 - Keep tomatoes that will be consumed raw separate from raw meats, raw seafood, and raw produce items.
 - Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot water and soap when switching between types of food products.
- The CDPH is recommending Californians use caution in selecting tomatoes by using guidance from the FDA. The FDA is advising consumers to limit their consumption of tomatoes to the following types of tomatoes. The tomatoes listed below are **NOT** likely to be the source of this outbreak:
 - cherry tomatoes
 - grape tomatoes
 - tomatoes sold with the vine still attached
 - tomatoes grown at home
- Also, FDA recommends consuming raw red plum, raw red Roma, or raw red round tomatoes **only** if grown and harvested from areas that **HAVE NOT BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE OUTBREAK**. FDA traceback review, in addition to production and distribution pattern information, has indicated that tomatoes from the following sources are **NOT** associated with the outbreak:
 - Arkansas
 - California**
 - Georgia
 - Hawaii
 - North Carolina
 - South Carolina
 - Tennessee
 - Texas
 - Belgium
 - Canada
 - Dominican Republic
 - Guatemala
 - Israel
 - Netherlands
 - Puerto Rico
- Consumers who are unsure of where the tomatoes are from that they have in their home are encouraged to contact the store or place of purchase for that information.

- Consumers should also be aware that raw tomatoes are often used in the preparation of fresh salsa, guacamole, and pico de gallo, are part of fillings for tortillas, and are used in other dishes.
- Restaurants, grocery stores, and food service operators have been advised by the FDA not to offer for sale or service raw red plum, Roma, or red tomatoes and products made from these types of tomatoes unless they are from one of the areas listed above.
- FDA further recommends that retailers, restaurateurs, and food service operators continue to offer cherry tomatoes, grape tomatoes, and tomatoes sold with the vine still attached, from any source.

INFORMATION

- *Salmonella* is an organism that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Healthy persons infected with *Salmonella* often experience fever, diarrhea (which may be bloody), nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Consumers who are experiencing the above symptoms should consult their health care provider.
- Consumers with questions may contact the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Division office at (831) 454-2022. Further information is available at the FDA website, <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.html>

(www.santacruzhealth.org/alerts for informational updates and other alerts)