## *Salmonella* Altona Infections Associated with Contact with Baby Chicks

April Dakota County/Multiple states

On May 2, 2011, the Minnesota Department of Health Public Health Laboratory identified a *Salmonella* Altona isolate of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) subtype designation LXNX01.0009 that matched cases in other states. At the time the Minnesota case was identified, the CDC had been working with several states on an investigation of the cluster. An investigation of the Minnesota case was initiated in collaboration with the multi-state investigation.

In Minnesota, a case was defined as a Minnesota resident with culture-confirmed *Salmonella* Altona with PFGE subtype LXNX01.0009.

The case was interviewed by phone regarding illness history and potential exposures. Questionnaires developed by CDC were used in addition to the Minnesota routine surveillance form. CDC coordinated a multi-state investigation of the cases.

One case with *Salmonella* Altona LXNX01.0009 isolate was identified in Minnesota. The case was a 59-year old male with illness onset on April 25. The case reported diarrhea, vomiting, and fever without cramps or bloody diarrhea. He was hospitalized for 7 days.

Nationally, 45 cases with isolates that matched the outbreak PFGE subtype were reported from 15 states: Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Vermont, Wisconsin, and West Virginia. Illness onsets ranged from February 25 to May 27, 2011. The median age of cases was 46 years (range, ≤1 to 86 years), and 53% were female. Among the cases for whom hospitalization status was known, 12 (31%) were hospitalized. None of the cases died.

The Minnesota case reported purchasing two baby chicks and feed from Company A in Inver Grove Heights at the beginning of March. The case reported that the baby chicks were kept in the kitchen and that the chicks died approximately 1 week after they were purchased.

Nationally, 31 of 39 (79%) cases with available information reported exposure to chicks and ducklings, and 24 of 26 (92%) of cases reported buying the chicks and ducklings from a Company A store. In discussions with Company A, CDC learned that all the retail locations where cases purchased poultry had received poultry from a single hatchery in Ohio. Environmental specimens collected from a case's household in Ohio, and three environmental samples collected from chick and duckling displays at two locations of Company A in North Carolina, were positive for the outbreak strain of *S*. Altona.

During this investigation, a cluster of *Salmonella* Johannesburg infections including 24 cases from 14 states was also found to be associated with baby chicks purchased from Company A stores and originating from the hatchery in Ohio.

This was a multi-state outbreak of *Salmonella* Altona infections associated with contact with baby chicks from a single mail order hatchery and sold at Company A locations. Cases with a second serotype, *Salmonella* Johannesburg, were also found to be associated with baby chicks sold at the same national retail chain and originating from the same Ohio hatchery. One case of *Salmonella* Altona associated with this outbreak was identified in Minnesota. The Minnesota case reported purchasing baby chicks from a Company A store in Minnesota.