

***Salmonella* Newport Infections Associated with Cantaloupe**

July-August

Multiple counties/Multiple states

On August 1, 2012, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and several state health departments, including the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) began an investigation of a cluster of *Salmonella* Newport cases with isolates with indistinguishable pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) patterns (MDH *Xba*I designation NEW403; CDC designation JJPX01.4014). There were 10 cases geographically clustered in 5 states: Illinois (2), Michigan (5), Minnesota (1), Ohio (1), and Wisconsin (1). Cases in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota all shopped at different Walmart locations.

A case was defined as a person from whom *S. Newport* with the outbreak PFGE pattern (JJPX01.4014) was isolated, and who had illness onset from July 1 to August 31, 2012. Minnesota cases were interviewed with the routine MDH broad-based exposure questionnaire.

Four *S. Newport* cases were identified in Minnesota. The median age of the Minnesota cases was 62 years (range, 57 to 79 years). All were female and had illness onsets from July 15 through August 10. Three (75%) cases reported diarrhea, cramps, and fever. One (25%) case also reported bloody stools and vomiting. One case had severe dementia and symptom history was unknown. This case was hospitalized for a foot amputation and had a blood culture done during hospitalization that was positive for the outbreak strain of *S. Newport*. This was the only hospitalized case.

In initial interviews, all Minnesota cases (including interview of a family member for the case with dementia) reported shopping at various locations of Grocery Chain A. Three of the cases had purchased and consumed cantaloupe in the week prior to illness onset. Several other midwestern cases reported cantaloupe consumption.

Two cases in Minnesota, one case in Wisconsin, and one case in Michigan were able to provide purchase receipts for their cantaloupe. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) worked with other state agriculture departments, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Grocery Chain A, and its regional distributor to look at sources for the cantaloupes. One problem identified with cantaloupe receipts was the price look up (plu) code. If a cashier at a specific Grocery Chain A location did not use the correct product code for the specific variety of cantaloupe, the traceback investigations could be subject to inaccuracies. Cantaloupes for three cases, two purchased at a single Grocery Chain A location in Wisconsin, and one from a Grocery Chain A location in Michigan were identified as Athena cantaloupes from Farm A in Poseyville, Indiana. The other Minnesota case receipt showed a western cantaloupe that would have been from one of two farms in California. It is unknown if the plu code on the receipt was correct for this cantaloupe or if other cantaloupes might have been purchased in this timeframe by that case. Additional receipts for other cases were not available.

An additional cantaloupe outbreak investigation involving *S. Typhimurium* and a different PFGE subtype of *S. Newport* was underway during this investigation (1). On August 17, several states (including Minnesota) and CDC issued press releases warning consumers not to eat cantaloupe from southwestern Indiana due to that *S. Typhimurium*/Newport outbreak. Farm A (implicated in this NEW403 outbreak) is in southwest Indiana, just 13 miles from Owensville, the location of Farm B where the cantaloupes implicated in the *S. Typhimurium*/Newport outbreak were grown.

In the traceback investigation, FDA did not find any positive environmental or product samples in the distribution chain for the NEW403 outbreak. FDA officials did not pursue an environmental assessment of Farm A because the team that assessed Farm B for the concurrent outbreak went to Farm A and found that they were no longer in cantaloupe production. As of September, 2012, FDA officials were considering a regional assessment at the beginning of the next growing season.

This was a multi-state outbreak of *S. Newport* infections likely associated with consuming cantaloupe from Farm A in Poseyville, Indiana. Four cases of *S. Newport* related to this outbreak were identified in Minnesota. Environmental assessment of the farm was not pursued since the growing season was complete, though an assessment was under consideration for the following year.

Reference

1. Multistate Outbreak of *Salmonella* Typhimurium and *Salmonella* Newport Infections Linked to Cantaloupe <http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/typhimurium-cantaloupe-08-12/index.html>