## *Salmonella* Newport Infections Probably Associated with Watermelon

June Multiple counties/Multiple states

On July 6, 2017, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Public Health Laboratory (PHL) identified a cluster of two *Salmonella* Newport isolates with indistinguishable pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) patterns (Minnesota designation NEW360; national designation JJPX01.0381). They also determined that the two Minnesota isolates were indistinguishable from clinical isolates from Michigan and additional states. A multi-state investigation was initiated.

A case was defined as a person from whom *S*. Newport with the outbreak PFGE pattern was isolated, and who had illness onset since May 22, 2017. The Minnesota case was interviewed with a broad-based exposure questionnaire. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducted a traceback investigation.

Overall, 20 cases from 9 states were identified in this outbreak including GA [2], IN [2], MA, MI [8], MN [2], MO [2], NJ, OH, and VA. The two Minnesota cases were 9 and 7 years of age, and were both male.

Their illness onsets were June 19 and June 23. Both cases reported diarrhea, bloody stools, and fever. One case reported cramps and vomiting. One case was hospitalized for 3 days.

Upon initial interview, the mother of the first Minnesota case reported that he consumed watermelon at a wedding that he attended on June 17 at a community center in Bloomington. However, when she was re-interviewed she was unable to identify the caterer for the wedding or the exact location of the community center and declined to provide contact information for the bride and groom. Upon initial interview, the mother of the second case reported that he may have eaten watermelon during the week prior to illness. However, during the initial interview and re-interview she was not able to identify from which grocery store it could have been purchased.

Nationally, 14 of 20 (70%) cases reported consuming watermelon. The FDA and MDARD conducted a traceback of watermelons consumed by Michigan cases and cases in several other states, but a common distributor or grower was not identified. National investigations concluded that watermelons were the suspected vehicle but this was not confirmed.

This was a multi-state outbreak of *S*. Newport infections that was probably associated with consuming watermelon. However, a common source of the watermelons was not identified. Two cases of *S*. Newport infection related to this outbreak were identified in Minnesota.