

FDA Investigating a Multistate Outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord Linked to Tahini Produced by Achdut Ltd.

November 27, 2018

United States Food and Drug Administration, along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local partners, is investigating a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord illnesses linked to tahini imported from an Israeli manufacturer, Achdut Ltd., located in Ari'el, Israel.

Achdut Ltd. has voluntarily recalled all brands of tahini products manufactured from April 7, 2018 to May 21, 2018 with expiration dates of April 7, 2020 to May 21, 2020.

Recommendations

The FDA is advising consumers not to eat recalled Achva, Achdut, Soom, S&F, Pepperwood, and Baron's brand tahini with expiration dates ranging from April 7, 2020 to May 21, 2020. The product lot codes range from 18-097 to 18-141. Consumers should discard the product or return the product to the store for a refund.

Some brands of tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd. may lack specific dates or may have labels that are written in Hebrew. Consumers who have purchased a tahini product and are uncertain of where the product was manufactured or cannot identify the brand by lot codes or expiration dates should use caution and discard the product or return the food to the store for a refund. More product information and pictures of the recalled product labels can be found in the firm's **recall announcement**.

Retailers and restaurants should not use any of the recalled tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd. at their establishments. Retailers and restaurants should throw the product out.

Firms that may have used the recalled tahini (either repacked or used as an ingredient in a food without a kill step) should consider recalling their products. Recalls should be reported to your local FDA office. A list of recall coordinators can be found **here**.

Consumers who have symptoms of salmonellosis should contact their health care provider to report their symptoms and receive care.

Background

CDC identified five ill people in the U.S. infected with *Salmonella* Concord that had the same genetic fingerprint as the *Salmonella* Concord found in tahini sampled at the point of import into the United States. Of the five U.S. cases interviewed, all five reported consuming hummus made with tahini; three people reported eating tahini or hummus made with tahini in a restaurant in the U.S., while the other two people reported consuming tahini or hummus made with tahini during international travel.

A sample of imported tahini collected by FDA at the point of import tested positive for *Salmonella* Concord. The tahini was Baron's brand manufactured by Achdut Ltd. This manufacturer was placed on an **FDA Import Alert**, detaining additional product from the firm at the U.S. border until evidence is presented demonstrating that *Salmonella* is not present in the product.

Whole genome sequencing analysis has indicated the positive sample of imported Baron's brand tahini is highly related to clinical isolates from ill people in the U.S.

Case Counts

Total Illnesses: 5
Hospitalizations: 0
Deaths: 0
Last illness onset: October 18, 2018
States with Cases: HI, MI, NY

Who to Contact

Consumers who have symptoms should contact their health care provider to report their symptoms and receive care.

To report a **complaint** or **adverse event** (illness or serious allergic reaction), you can

- Call an FDA [Consumer Complaint Coordinator](#) if you wish to speak directly to a person about your problem.
- Complete an [electronic Voluntary MedWatch form](#) online.
- Complete a [paper Voluntary MedWatch form](#) that can be mailed to FDA.

Visit www.fda.gov/fcic for additional consumer and industry assistance.

What is the Problem and What is Being Done?

- The United States Food and Drug Administration, along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local partners, is investigating a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Concord illnesses linked to tahini imported from an Israeli manufacturer, Achdut Ltd., located in Ari'el, Israel.
- Achdut Ltd. has voluntarily recalled all brands of tahini products manufactured from April 7, 2018 to May 21, 2018 with expiration dates of April 7, 2020 to May 21, 2020.
- The FDA is advising consumers not to eat recalled Achva, Achdut, Soom, S&F, Pepperwood, and Baron's brand tahini with expiration dates ranging from April 7, 2020 to May 21, 2020. The product lot codes range from 18-097 to 18-141. Consumers should discard the product or return the product to the store for a refund.
- Some brands of tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd. may lack specific dates or may have labels that are written in Hebrew. Consumers who have purchased a tahini product and are uncertain of where the product was manufactured or cannot identify the brand by lot codes or expiration dates should use caution and discard the product or return the food to the store for a refund.
- More product information and pictures of the recalled product labels can be found in the firm's [recall announcement](#).
- Retailers and restaurants should not use any of the recalled tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd. at their establishments. Retailers and restaurants should throw the product out.
- Firms that may have used the recalled tahini (either repacked or used as an ingredient in a food without a kill step) should consider recalling their products. Recalls should be reported to your local FDA office. A list of recall coordinators can be found [here](#).
- CDC identified five ill people in the U.S. infected with *Salmonella* Concord that had the same genetic fingerprint as the *Salmonella* Concord found in tahini sampled at the point of import into the United States. Of the five U.S. cases interviewed, all five reported consuming hummus made with tahini; three people reported eating tahini or hummus made with tahini in a restaurant in the

U.S., while the other two people reported consuming tahini or hummus made with tahini during international travel.

- A sample of imported tahini collected by FDA at the point of import tested positive for *Salmonella* Concord. The tahini was Baron's brand manufactured by Achdut Ltd. This manufacturer was placed on an [FDA Import Alert](#), detaining additional product from the firm at the U.S. border until evidence is presented demonstrating that *Salmonella* is not present in the product. Whole genome sequencing analysis has indicated the positive sample of imported Baron's brand tahini is highly related to clinical isolates from ill people in the U.S.

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What Products are being Recalled?

The following products have been [recalled](#):

Achdut Ltd. has voluntarily recalled Achva, Achdut, Soom, S&F, Pepperwood, and Baron's brands of tahini products manufactured from April 7, 2018 to May 21, 2018 with expiration dates of April 7, 2020 to May 21, 2020. Recalled tahini products were sold in 15oz, 16oz, 17.6oz, 635 oz (428g, 454g, 500g, 18Kg) containers. The product lot codes range from 18-097 to 18-141.

Some brands of tahini manufactured by Achdut Ltd. may lack specific dates or may have labels that are written in Hebrew. Consumers who have purchased a tahini product and are uncertain of where the product was manufactured or cannot identify the brand by lot codes or expiration dates should use caution and discard the product or return the food to the store for a refund. More product information and pictures of the recalled product labels can be found in the firms [recall announcement](#).



What is *Salmonella*?

Salmonella is a bacterium that makes people sick. The illness, salmonellosis, usually lasts 4 to 7 days and most people recover without treatment. Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps between 12 and 72 hours after infection.

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Who is at Risk?

Children are the most likely to get salmonellosis. The rate of diagnosed infections in children less than five years old is higher than the rate in all other persons. Children younger than 5 years of age,

the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe infections. It is estimated that approximately 400 persons die each year with acute salmonellosis.

What Do Restaurants and Retailers Need To Do?

Restaurants and retailers should not sell or use recalled Achva, Achdut, Soom, S&F, Pepperwood, and Baron's brand when preparing meals. Restaurants and retailers should dispose of any of the recalled tahini by throwing the product in the garbage or returning this product to the place of purchase for credit or refund.

Restaurants and retailers who have served any potentially contaminated or recalled products need to be concerned about cross-contamination of food processing equipment and the food processing environment. They should follow the steps below:

- Wash and sanitize display cases and refrigerators regularly.
- Wash and sanitize cutting boards, surfaces, and utensils used to prepare, serve, or store food.
- Wash hands with hot water and soap following the cleaning and sanitation process.

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What Do Consumers Need To Do?

People should not eat recalled Achva, Achdut, Soom, S&F, Pepperwood, and Baron's brand tahini products. If they have any of the recalled Achdut Ltd. tahini products, they should throw them in the garbage or return them to the place of purchase for credit or a refund. More product information and pictures of the recalled product labels can be found in the firm's [recall announcement](#).

- People who think they might have become ill from eating possibly contaminated tahini should talk to their health care providers.
- Consumers should always practice safe food handling and preparation measures. Wash hands, utensils, and surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after handling food.
 - Thoroughly clean all food preparation surfaces and utensils that may have come in contact with the potentially contaminated product.
 - Additionally, consumers who purchased tahini should wash and disinfect drawers or shelves in refrigerators where the product was stored or any surfaces where the tahini may have come into contact, such as counters, containers, bags, etc.