

***Salmonella* Berta Infections Associated with an Unidentified Commercially Distributed Product**

March

Ramsey County/Multiple states

In March 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) investigated a cluster of *Salmonella* Berta cases that included a single Minnesota case. The national cluster code was 2004MLJAX-1.

A case was defined as a person with a specimen isolation date from February 11 to April 25, 2020, from whom *S. Berta* closely related to the outbreak clade by whole genome sequencing (WGS) was isolated. Cases were contacted for interview with a routine surveillance questionnaire.

Overall, 13 cases from 10 states were identified in this outbreak (CA [1], IL [1], IN [1], MN [1], OH [1], PA [1], SC [1], TX [2], UT [3], WI [1]). Isolation dates ranged from February 11 to April 25, 2020. The median age of cases was 22 years (range, 0 to 83 years), and 77% were female. Of eight cases with information available, five (63%) reported Asian race. Four cases were hospitalized, and there were no deaths.

Three food isolates collected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) were also related to the outbreak strain including isolates from pork (n=2) and beef (n=1) with isolation dates from February 14 to April 9, 2020. All clinical and food isolates were related within 0-7 alleles by WGS.

One Minnesota case was identified in this outbreak. The Minnesota case was a female in her 50s who reported Asian (Hmong) race. The case was hospitalized for 4 days and survived. The case refused most of the surveillance interview, but did report no travel in the week prior to illness onset, and no contact with a farm. Illness onset was March 3.

This was a multi-state foodborne outbreak of *S. Berta* infections associated with a commercially distributed vehicle. Genetic similarity of human, pork and beef isolates, as well as race and gender demographics, indicated that the cases in the cluster had a common source of infection. However, the outbreak vehicle was not determined.