

Outbreak of *Salmonella* Newport Infections Linked to Onions

Updated August 13, 2020 at 4:30 PM ET

CDC, public health and regulatory officials in several states, and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating a multistate outbreak of *Salmonella* Newport infections linked to onions.

Recall and Advice to Consumers, Restaurants, and Retailers

At A Glance

- [Reported Cases](#): 640
- [States](#): 43
- Hospitalizations: 85
- Deaths: 0
- Recall: Yes

Do not eat, serve, or sell recalled onions from Thomson International, Inc., or food made with these onions. Onion types include red, white, yellow, and sweet yellow varieties. Other companies have also recalled food made with recalled onions, such as cheese dip and chicken salads.

- **At home, check your refrigerator and kitchen** for recalled onions or foods made with them, such as salads, wraps, tacos, sandwiches, etc.
 - Check the package of raw onions or look for a sticker on the onion to see if it is from Thomson International, Inc., or one of the brand names below. If it is, don't eat it. Throw it away.
 - **Other brand names that may be on labels include:** Thomson Premium, TLC Thomson International, Tender Loving Care, El Competitor, Hartley's Best, Onions 52, Majestic, Imperial Fresh, Kroger, Utah Onions, and Food Lion.
 - **See the recall notice** to check for further details and pictures of the products.
 - **Some foods made with recalled onions, such as deli salads and vegetable mixes, have also been recalled, and additional recalls of raw onions sold at Giant Eagle, Publix, and Trader Joe's, have occurred. Check your homes for the recalled products listed below.**
 - If you can't tell where your onions are from, don't eat them. Throw them away.
 - If you used onions to make any other food and don't know where the onions were from, don't eat the food. Throw it away, even if some of it was eaten and no one got sick.

- Wash and sanitize any surfaces that may have come in contact with onions or their packaging, such as countertops, storage bins, refrigerator drawers, knives, and cutting boards.
- **When you order food from a restaurant or shop for food, check with the restaurant or grocery store** to make sure they are not serving or selling recalled onions from Thomson International, Inc., or any foods prepared with recalled onions, including foods such as salads, sandwiches, tacos, salsas, and dips.
 - If they don't know where their onions are from, don't buy the product.
 - People sickened in this outbreak reported eating onions in freshly prepared foods, including salads, sandwiches, tacos, salsas, and dips.

Advice to Restaurants, Retailers, and Suppliers

- **Restaurants and retailers** should not serve or sell recalled onions from Thomson International, Inc., or food prepared with these onions.
 - If you don't know where your onions are from, don't serve or sell them.
 - Clean and sanitize all surfaces that onions have come in contact with, including cutting boards, countertops, slicers, utensils, and storage bins.
- **Suppliers, distributors, and others in the supply chain** should not ship or sell recalled onions from Thomson International, Inc.
 - Suppliers and distributors that repackage raw onions should clean and sanitize any surfaces and storage bins that may have come in contact with recalled onions.

Recalls

Additional recalls related to this outbreak may occur. Please refer to the FSIS websites for the latest recall information.

- On August 12, cheese dips were recalled from the following stores: Kroger, Kroger Mid-Atlantic, Kroger Delta Division, Fr's Food Stores, Fred Meyer, and Smith's.
- On August 10, Progressive Produce LLC recalled red onions sold at Trader Joe's stores in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah as well as yellow onions sold in Ralph's stores in California.
- On August 10, Spokane Produce Inc. recalled salsas that were made from recalled onions.
- On August 5, Taylor Farms issued a recall of foods that were made from recalled onions.
- On August 5, Publix recalled onions sold in bulk at stores in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.
- On August 5, the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) issued a public health alert for products made with recalled onions. Check the alert for product details and pictures. USDA-FSIS will update the public health alert as more information becomes available.
- On August 1, Giant Eagle recalled onions and foods made with recalled onions sold in stores across Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, and Maryland.
- On August 1, 2020, Thomson International, Inc., voluntarily recalled red, yellow, white, and sweet yellow onions because they may be contaminated with *Salmonella*.

- Onions were distributed to wholesalers, restaurants, and retail stores in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- Onions were distributed in bulk cartons and mesh sacks ranging from 2 to 50 pounds under these brand names: Thomson Premium, TLC Thomson International, Tender Loving Care, El Competitor, Hartley's Best, Onions 52, Majestic, Imperial Fresh, Kroger, Utah Onions, and Food Lion.
- **See the recall notice to check for universal product codes (UPC) and pictures of the products.**

Symptoms of *Salmonella* Infection

- Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps 6 hours to 6 days after being exposed to the bacteria.
- The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.
- In some people, the illness may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other places in the body.
- Children younger than 5 years, adults 65 years and older, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.
- For more information, see [Symptoms of Salmonella Infection](#).

Take these steps if you have symptoms of a *Salmonella* infection:

- Talk to your healthcare provider.
- Write down what you ate in the week before you started to get sick.
- Report your illness to your local health department.
 - The health department will likely call you for an interview to ask you about foods you ate in the week before you got sick.
- Assist public health investigators by answering their questions when they contact you.

Latest Outbreak Information

- Since the last case count update on July 31, 2020, an additional 244 ill people have been reported in this outbreak, including 15 from 10 new states: Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, West Virginia.
- On August 12, cheese dips were recalled from the following stores: Kroger, Kroger Mid-Atlantic, Kroger Delta Division, Fry's Food Stores, Fred Meyer, and Smith's.
- On August 10, Progressive Produce LLC recalled red onions sold at Trader Joe's stores in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah as well as yellow onions sold in Ralph's stores in California.
- On August 10, Spokane Produce Inc. recalled salsas that were made from recalled onions.
- A total of 640 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Newport have been reported from 43 states.
 - 85 hospitalizations have been reported. No deaths have been reported.

- Epidemiologic and traceback information showed that red onions are a likely source of this outbreak.
- This investigation is ongoing. CDC will provide more information as it becomes available.

Investigation Details

August 7, 2020

As of August 6, 2020, a total of 640 people infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Newport have been reported from 43 states. A list of the states and the number of cases in each can be found on the [Map of Reported Cases page](#).

Illnesses started on dates ranging from June 19, 2020 to July 23, 2020. Ill people range in age from less than 1 to 102 years, with a median age of 39. Fifty-four percent of ill people are female. Of 343 ill people with information available, 85 hospitalizations have been reported. No deaths have been reported.

Illnesses might not yet be reported due to the time it takes between when a person becomes ill and when the illness is reported. This takes an average of 2 to 4 weeks. Please see the [Timeline for Reporting Cases of Salmonella Infection](#) for more details.

Whole genome sequencing analysis of 48 isolates from ill people did not predict any antibiotic resistance. Standard antibiotic susceptibility testing by CDC's National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS) laboratory is underway.

Whole genome sequencing analysis shows that an outbreak of *Salmonella* Newport infections in Canada is related genetically to this outbreak in the United States. This means that people in both of these outbreaks are likely to share a common source of infection.

Investigation of the Outbreak

On July 10, 2020, CDC's PulseNet identified an outbreak of 13 *Salmonella* Newport infections in three states. Since being identified, the outbreak has rapidly grown to a total of 640 infections in 43 states.

State and local public health officials are interviewing ill people to determine what they ate and other exposures in the week before their illness started.

Many ill people were identified as part of illness clusters. An illness cluster is defined as two or more people who do not live in the same household who report eating at the same restaurant location, attending a common event, or shopping at the same location of a grocery store in the week before becoming ill. Investigating illness clusters can provide critical clues about the source of an outbreak. If several unrelated ill people ate or shopped at the same location of a restaurant or store within several days of each other, it suggests that the contaminated food item was served or sold there. Twenty-five illness clusters have been identified in nine states.

Information from these clusters shows that many ill people ate red onions. The traceback information collected from these illness clusters identified Thomson International, Inc., of Bakersfield, Calif., as a likely source of red onions. Due to the way onions are grown and harvested, other onion types, such as, white, yellow, or sweet yellow, may also be contaminated. Additional traceback is ongoing to determine if other onions are linked to the outbreak.

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is investigating an outbreak of *Salmonella* Newport infections in Canada that is related by whole genome sequencing to the U.S. outbreak. On July 30, PHAC's outbreak investigation identified U.S. red onions as a likely source of its outbreak.

On August 1, 2020, Thomson International, Inc., voluntarily recalled red, yellow, white, and sweet yellow onions because they may be contaminated with *Salmonella*.

On August 1, Giant Eagle recalled onions and foods made with recalled onions sold in stores across Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana and Maryland.

On August 5, Publix recalled onions sold in bulk at stores in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

On August 5, 2020, the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) issued a public health alert for products made with recalled onions. Check the alert for product details.

On August 5, 2020, Taylor Farms issued a recall of foods that were made from recalled onions.

Consumers, restaurants, and retailers should not eat, serve, or sell recalled onions from Thomson International, Inc., of Bakersfield, California, or other foods made with recalled onions.

CDC will provide updates when more information is available.