

Outbreak Investigation of *E. coli* O157:H7: Raw Cheddar Cheese (February 2024)

Do not eat, sell, or serve RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar Cheese. FDA's investigation is ongoing.



[Images of Additional Products](#)

Products:

RAW FARM- brand Raw Cheddar (block and shredded) cheese products:

- Original Flavor: all sizes of blocks and shredded packages
- Cheddar with added Jalapeño Flavor: all sizes of blocks and shredded packages

Symptoms of [*E. coli*](#):

Symptoms begin anywhere from a few days after consuming contaminated food or up to nine days later. Symptoms include severe stomach cramps, diarrhea, fever, nausea, and/or vomiting.

The severity or presence of certain symptoms may depend on the type of pathogenic *E. coli* causing the infection. Some infections can cause severe bloody diarrhea and lead to life-threatening conditions, such as a type of kidney failure called hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), or the development of high blood pressure, chronic kidney disease, and neurologic problems.

Stores Affected

- Sold at retailers nationwide.

Ill people have reported purchasing RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese at Sprouts Farmers Market and Bristol Farms. There may be other retailers who are selling the RAW FARM- brand Raw Cheddar cheese and we will update the advisory as more information becomes available.

Status

- Ongoing; updates will be provided as they become available.

Recommendations:

- Do not eat, sell, or serve RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese products.
- Check your refrigerators and freezers for the RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese (blocks or shredded) and throw them away. If you froze a product without the original packaging and can't identify the brand, throw it away.
- Consumers, restaurants, and retailers who purchased or received RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese, including wholesale products, should carefully clean and sanitize any surfaces or containers that it touched. Follow [FDA's safe handling](#) and cleaning advice to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- Retailers that purchased this product and repackaged it for individual sale should remove the product from the market.
- Due to the range in severity of illness, people should consult their health care provider if they suspect that they have developed symptoms that resemble an *E. coli* infection.

Current Update

February 28, 2024

The FDA and CDC, in collaboration with state and local partners, are continuing to investigate a multistate outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7.

As this investigation is ongoing, FDA and CDC continue to recommend that people do not eat, sell, or serve RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese made by RAW FARM, LLC, of Fresno, CA. State and local public health officials have interviewed people about the foods they ate in the week before they became sick. Nearly all sick people, seven out of nine (78%), reported eating RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese and this continues to show these cheeses are the likely source of this outbreak. *E. coli* can cause an infection that may lead to serious kidney problems. Anyone who ate the raw cheeses and has symptoms of *E. coli* infection should contact their healthcare provider.

As of February 28, 2024, a total of 11 confirmed infections have been reported from five states, including CA (4), CO (3), NJ (1), TX (1), and UT (2). Whole genome sequencing analysis of *E. coli* isolates from ill people shows that they are all closely related genetically to each other. This means that people in this outbreak are likely to share a common source of infection. Five patients

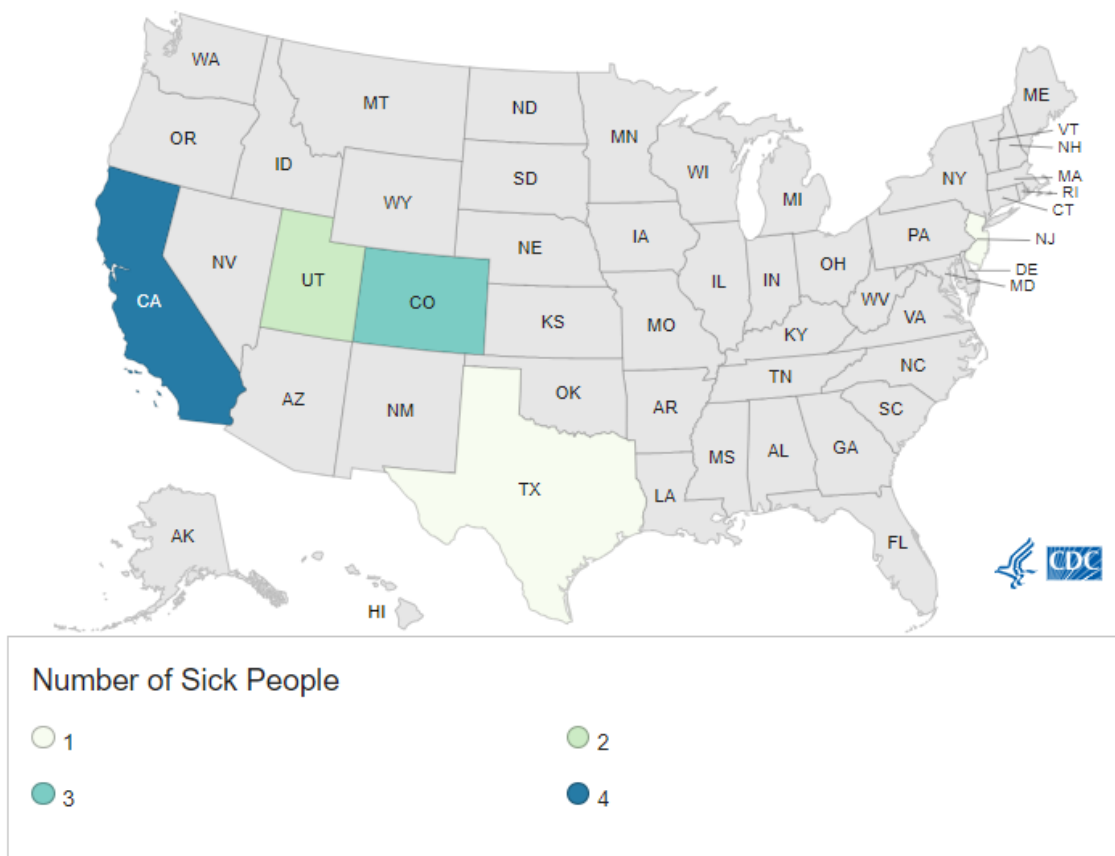
have been hospitalized; two developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), a serious condition that can lead to kidney failure. No deaths have been reported.

Health officials in CO, CA, and UT have collected various RAW FARM-brand products for testing, including Raw Milk, Raw Butter, Raw Cheddar cheese, and Raw Kefir. So far, no product samples have detected *E. coli*. While *E. coli* has not been found in product samples, epidemiologic evidence shows that RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese made by RAW FARM, LLC is the likely source of this outbreak. Additional testing is ongoing.

In response to this investigation, on February 16, 2024, RAW FARM, LLC initiated a recall of certain lots of RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese currently within shelf life. On February 26, 2024, RAW FARM, LLC withdrew their voluntary recall.

The investigation is ongoing, and FDA will update this advisory should additional consumer safety information become available.

Case Count Map Provided by CDC



Case Counts

Total Illnesses: 11

Hospitalizations: 5

Deaths: 0

Last Sample Collection Dates: February 5, 2024

States with Cases: CA, CO, NJ, TX, UT

Product Distribution: Nationwide

Useful Links

- [CDC Outbreak Advisory](#)
 - [Food Safety and Raw Milk](#)
 - [What is *E. coli*?](#)
 - [Food Safety Tips for Retailers and Consumers During an Outbreak](#)
 - [Who to Contact](#)
-

Product Images







Previous Update

February 16, 2024

The FDA and CDC, in collaboration with state and local partners, are investigating a multistate outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 infections linked to RAW FARM-brand Raw Cheddar cheese made by RAW FARM, LLC, of Fresno, CA.

As of February 16, 2024, a total of 10 confirmed infections have been reported from four states, including CA (4), CO (3), TX (1), and UT (2). Whole genome sequencing analysis of *E. coli* isolates from ill people shows that they are all closely related genetically to each other. This means that people in this outbreak are likely to share a common source of infection. Four patients have been hospitalized; one developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), a serious condition that can lead to kidney failure. No deaths have been reported.

State and local public health officials have interviewed people about the foods they ate in the week before they became ill. Six (75%) ill people reported consuming RAW FARM- brand Raw Cheddar cheese. Epidemiologic evidence shows that RAW FARM- brand Raw Cheddar cheese made by RAW FARM, LLC are the likely source of this outbreak.

In response to this investigation, on February 16, 2024, RAW FARM, LLC initiated a recall of certain lots of RAW FARM- brand Raw Cheddar cheese currently within shelf life. FDA is continuing to work with the firm to remove additional product from the market.

The investigation is ongoing to determine the source of contamination and whether additional products are linked to illnesses. FDA will update this advisory should additional consumer safety information become available.