

Public Health Notice: Outbreak of *Salmonella* infections linked to Malichita and Rudy brand cantaloupes



December 22, 2023 - Update

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Why you should take note

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is collaborating with federal and provincial public health partners, the [United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (U.S. CDC), and the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) to investigate an outbreak of *Salmonella* infections in eight provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Based on the investigation findings to date, consumption of Malichita and Rudy brand cantaloupes have been identified as the likely source of the outbreak. Many of the individuals who became sick reported having eaten cantaloupe before their illnesses occurred.

The majority of the individuals who became sick are children 5 years of age or younger, or adults 65 years of age or older. Many cases also report residing in a long-term care home, retirement residence, assisted living facility or attending daycare.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued food recall warnings on November 1, November 14 and November 17 for Malichita brand cantaloupes sold between October 11 and November 14, 2023. On November 24, 2023, CFIA updated the food recall warning to also include Rudy brand cantaloupes sold between October 10 and November 24, 2023. The recalled products were distributed in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and possibly other provinces and territories. Additional secondary recalls have been issued for products that were made using recalled cantaloupes and for produce items that were processed alongside recalled

cantaloupes. This includes other fruit like honeydew, pineapple, watermelon and various fruit trays.

The CFIA is continuing its food safety investigation, which may lead to the recall of other products. If other products are recalled, the CFIA will notify the public through additional food recall warnings. For more information on the recalled products, please consult CFIA's [recall notice](#).

To prevent illness, do not eat, serve, use, sell, or distribute:

- **Malichita or Rudy brand cantaloupe**
- **Any products made with Malichita or Rudy brand cantaloupe**
- **Any recalled produce**

If you are unable to verify the brand of cantaloupe, or if your produce is part of the CFIA recalls, it is recommended to throw it out. This advice applies to individuals, as well as retailers, distributors, manufacturers, food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, and facilities such as hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement residences, assisted living facilities and daycares, across Canada.

This public health notice will be updated as the investigation evolves.

Investigation summary

As of December 22, there have been 164 laboratory-confirmed cases of *Salmonella* Soahanina, Sundsvall and Oranienburg illness linked to this outbreak in the following provinces: British

Columbia (18), Alberta (4), Ontario (21), Quebec (111), Prince Edward Island (2), New Brunswick (2), Nova Scotia (4) and Newfoundland and Labrador (2). Additional *Salmonella* infections are under investigation and more illnesses associated with this outbreak may be confirmed. Individuals became sick between mid-October and early December 2023. Sixty-one (61) individuals have been hospitalized. Seven deaths have been reported. Individuals who became ill are between 0 to 100 years of age. The majority of the individuals who became sick are children 5 years of age or younger (36%), or adults 65 years of age or older (45%). About half of the cases (52%) are female.

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Through the CFIA investigation the outbreak strains of *Salmonella* that made people sick were found in samples of the recalled Malichita brand cantaloupe.

More recent illnesses may be reported in the outbreak because there is a period between when a person becomes ill and when the illness is reported to public health officials. For this outbreak, the illness reporting period is between 2 and 6 weeks.

The U.S. CDC is also investigating an outbreak of *Salmonella* illnesses linked to cantaloupes that is the same genetic strain as illnesses reported in this outbreak.

Symptoms

Symptoms typically start 6 to 72 hours after exposure to *Salmonella* bacteria, and usually last for 4-7 days.

Symptoms may include:

- fever
- chills
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- headache
- abdominal cramps

People who are infected with *Salmonella* bacteria can spread *Salmonella* to other people several days to several weeks after they have become infected, even if they don't have symptoms. *Salmonella* can spread by person to person contact and contaminated surfaces. Most people who become ill from a *Salmonella* infection will recover fully after a few days without treatment, but it can also cause severe illness and hospitalization.

Anyone can become sick with a *Salmonella* infection. If you think you're experiencing symptoms, contact your health care provider.

Those at higher risk for serious illness include:

- [older adults](#)
- [young children](#)
- [people who are pregnant](#)
- [people with weakened immune systems](#)

What you should do to protect your health

The following advice applies to individuals, as well as retailers, distributors, manufacturers, food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, and facilities such as hospitals, long-term care homes, assisted living facilities, retirement residences and daycares, across Canada:

- Do not eat, serve, use, sell or distribute Malichita or Rudy brand cantaloupe, any products made with Malichita or Rudy brand cantaloupe or any recalled produce.
- Check to see if you have Malichita or Rudy brand cantaloupe, any products made with the cantaloupe, or any recalled produce stored at home or in your freezer. If you do, throw them out and wash your hands.
- If you are unable to verify the brand of cantaloupe, or if your produce is part of the CFIA recalls, it is recommended to throw it out.
- Clean and sanitize all surfaces and storage areas that Malichita or Rudy brand cantaloupe or any products made with recalled produce may have come in contact with, including countertops, containers, utensils, freezers and refrigerators.
- If you have been diagnosed with a *Salmonella* infection or any other gastrointestinal illness, do not cook food for other people.

Epidemiological information

[Figure 1](#) is an epidemiological curve for this outbreak. Outbreak investigators use this information to show when illnesses begin, when they peak, and when they trail off. It can take several weeks from the time a person becomes ill to when the illness is reported and testing confirms a link to the outbreak. Data are available for 164 cases.

Figure 1. Number of people infected with *Salmonella* Soahanina, *Salmonella* Sundsvall, and *Salmonella* Oranienburg

