

# MARKET NEWS

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MERIEUX NUTRISCIENCES(CHINA)

BETTER FOOD. BETTER HEALTH. BETTER WORLD.

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## Focus on China

### Tracing system to ensure food safety



A tracing system to ensure the quality and safety of edible agricultural products will be set up in China, according to a draft amendment to the Law on the Quality and Safety of Agricultural Products.

The draft was submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for review on Tuesday.

It says that to establish the system, enterprises and farmers' cooperatives that produce such products should obtain certificates verifying their quality and safety and be responsible for the products they sell.

They should also implement tracing management to ensure all the data and information about agricultural products that needs to be traceable is available.

In addition, the draft would require producers to hold to the principles of integrity and self-discipline, be open to public supervision and shoulder social responsibility.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, China's Cabinet, have made the quality and safety of agricultural products a priority.

President Xi Jinping has stressed that the quality and safety of agricultural products should be a key part of the transformation of the development mode of agriculture and the speeding up of the establishment of modern agriculture to ensure people's safety.

Agriculture and Rural Affairs Minister Tang Renjian said the existing law was approved in 2006 and slightly amended in 2018.

"It has played a vital role in regulating production and operating activities, as well as ensuring the quality and safety of agricultural products," he said, adding that 97 percent of products had passed regular inspections in recent years, indicating that the quality and safety of agricultural products nationwide is good.

The new amendment will better serve the future supervision and management of the quality and safety of agricultural products, Tang said.

## International News

### FDA Releases Food Safety and Nutrition Survey Results

The FDA is releasing the latest results of its Food Safety and Nutrition Survey (FSANS) designed to assess consumers' awareness, knowledge, understanding and reported behaviors relating to a variety of food safety and nutrition related

topics. The findings are designed to help the FDA make better informed regulatory, policy, education, and other risk-management decisions to promote and protect public health.

The survey combines the previously separate Food Safety Survey and Health and Diet Survey, which were last conducted in 2016 and 2014, respectively. The survey was sent by mail to respondents, who could then submit it online or by mail. It incorporates approximately 4,400 responses collected during October and November of 2019.

Among the key findings:

- Most consumers are familiar with the Nutrition Facts label – 87% of respondents have looked at the Nutrition Facts label on food packages. The top four items that consumers look for on the label are: Calories, Total Sugar, Sodium, and Serving Size. Consumers report using the label most frequently for seeing “how high or low the food is in things like calories, salt, vitamins, or fat,” “for getting a general idea of the nutritional content of the food,” and “to compare different food items with each other.”
- Most consumers have seen menu labeling at restaurants – Most respondents (70%) reported that they have seen calorie information on menus and menu boards. Of those who have seen such information, 53% reported using the calorie information, and most often indicated using it to avoid ordering high-calorie menu items.
- Consumers are familiar with front of package claims – Over 80% of respondents have seen claims such as, “No added sugar,” “Whole grain,” “Organic,” “Gluten-free,” “Low fat,” “No artificial ingredients,” “Low sugar,” and “No artificial colors.”

- Hand washing practices vary depending on the occasion – Consumers are more likely to wash hands with soap after touching raw meat (76%), than before preparing food (68%), or after cracking raw eggs (39%).
- The majority of consumers own a food thermometer, but usage varies depending on what is being cooked – Sixty-two (62%) of respondents reported owning a food thermometer. Usage among those who own food thermometers and cook the food ranges from 85% for whole chickens, 79% for beef, lamb or pork roasts, to 40% for chicken parts, 36% for burgers, 23% for egg dishes, and 20% for frozen meals.

### Biofilms bring safety challenges to food companies



Food processors and manufacturers know the environments in which they operate are friendly to organisms that can taint their products, potentially leading to foodborne illness outbreaks.

Food safety plans and specific good manufacturing processes outlined in those documents are designed to combat common pathogens — including strains of *Listeria*, *Salmonella* and *E. coli* — that could lead to recalls or outbreaks.

Whether or not food safety plans specifically mention “biofilms,” in many cases they are the root cause of contamination in food facilities. Approximately 60 percent of foodborne illness outbreaks are caused by biofilms, according to food safety research.

What are biofilms?

Essentially, biofilms are communities of micro-organisms that stick to surfaces. They are naturally occurring and can be found clinging to everything from plant and animal tissue, drug devices such as implants, water system infrastructure, and of course, in manufacturing facilities.

“Biofilms are everywhere in nature. . . . (They) are the natural state of organisms and have been around since the beginning of time,” said Bob Forner, director of marketing for Sterilex Industries, which supplies products designed to detect and kill biofilms for food processing, animal health, and water treatment industries.

Biofilms can harbor clusters of specific pathogens or a combination of them. In production facilities, food contact surfaces are hotspots on which to focus biofilm sanitation efforts, because of the possibility cross-contamination will occur — repeatedly, if not properly treated.

“They are significantly more challenging to kill” than pathogens found in free-floating (known as planktonic) cells in liquids, Forner said.

Why are biofilms so hard to eradicate?

The pathogens themselves produce what is known as a matrix of extracellular polymeric substance (EPS) made up of proteins, lipids, polysaccharides, and nucleic acids. The EPS gives the pathogens a protective home that resists sanitation efforts.

“Free-floating bacteria basically form a group to help protect themselves,” Forner said. “While traditional sanitizers are effective against these free-floating bacteria, they don’t necessarily allow you to kill all of the pathogens within the biofilm.”

Fighting a biofilm with these traditional sanitizers is like peeling layers from an onion, you’re really just addressing the bacteria on the surface he said.

“Even if you succeed in killing all of the pathogens in the biofilm, you will likely still leave the EPS structure behind” Forner said. “Without removing the structure from the surface, it’s a lot easier for the microbes to repopulate the biofilm.”

Biofilm research and awareness on the rise

Tests that detect salmonella or other pathogens on food contact surfaces don’t necessarily indicate the presence of biofilms, but Forner said the food safety community is aware of the dangers they pose.

“I think recently there’s been more of a focus on them as a source of foodborne illness,” he said. “A lot of the endemic pathogens that are in food plants are housed in biofilms and that’s why they’re so hard to get rid of.”

He said organizations such as the International Association of Food Protection are targeting biofilm content at conferences and educational outreach to food companies.

“Industries are more aware of them than they have been in the past and as a result, they do put more emphasis on trying to remove those biofilms from surfaces,” Forner said.

Boce Zhang, who led a Center for Produce Safety-funded study on different food contact surfaces in processing plants and their ability to resist biofilm growth, said biofilm is a natural survival mechanism that enhances the advantage of bacteria.

“It is imperative to understand the role of biofilm on the likelihood of pathogen survival and transmission,” said Zhang, assistant professor of Biomedical and Nutritional Sciences at the University of Massachusetts. “Addressing biofilm challenges requires a holistic approach and novel control strategies.”

### Survey shows consumers’ thoughts on food safety and nutrition



The FDA has completed data analysis that shows people are more concerned

about getting a foodborne illness from restaurant food than food prepared at home.

The report from the Food and Drug Administration reveals information from a 2019 public survey about food safety and nutrition. The annual Food Safety and Nutrition Survey (FSANS) is a national probability consumer survey designed to assess consumers’ awareness, knowledge, understanding, and self-reported behaviors relating to a variety of food safety and nutrition-related topics.

Previously the survey was conducted by phone, but the agency pursued responses in a different way for the 2019 survey.

“FSANS use(d) an address-based sampling method and is ‘mail – push to web.’ A detailed description of this methodology can be found at the end of the full report,” according to an announcement from the FDA.

“The survey findings are intended to help FDA make better-informed regulatory, policy, education, and other risk-management decisions aimed at promoting and protecting public health.”

Adults aged 18 and older and living in the 50 states plus the District of Columbia were included in the survey. A total of 4,398 responses was collected during October and November of 2019.

Each selected household received up to five mailings requesting participation in the study. The first was a notification letter on FDA letterhead introducing the study and providing the information necessary, including the web address for the survey and a unique personal identification number assigned to each household. The FDA survey webpage provided commonly asked questions about the survey topics in both English and Spanish, and a link that routed each participant to the survey host website.

Each respondent was randomly assigned to one of the two versions of the survey — food safety or nutrition. Some overlapping questions were asked on both versions.

The full report is 76 pages long and provides key findings as well as all of the survey questions and data on responses. The responses are broken down in numbers and percentages for easy reference.

#### Key findings from the food safety questions

- Consumers think people are more likely to get a foodborne illness from food prepared at a restaurant than food prepared at home – Few respondents, 15 percent, thought it was “very common” for people to get food poisoning because of the way food is prepared at home, compared to 29 percent who thought it was “very common” to get food poisoning because of the way food is prepared in restaurants.
- Consumers are more concerned about raw chicken and raw beef than raw vegetables or fruit being contaminated – More respondents thought that raw chicken, 93 percent and raw beef, 66 percent were “likely or highly likely” to have germs than raw vegetables, 9 percent or fruit 6 percent.
- Consumer awareness of germs varies greatly depending on the type of germ – Awareness is high for Salmonella at 97 percent and E. coli at 88 percent but comparatively low for Campylobacter at 7 percent and Vibrio at 4 percent.
- Hand washing practices vary depending on the occasion – Consumers are more likely to wash hands with soap after touching raw meat, 76 percent, than before preparing food, 68 percent or after cracking raw eggs, 39 percent.

- The majority of consumers own a food thermometer, but usage varies depending on what is being cooked – Sixty-two percent of respondents reported owning a food thermometer. Usage among those who own food thermometers and cook the food ranges from 85 percent for whole chickens and 79 percent for beef, lamb or pork roasts, to 40 percent for chicken parts, 36 percent for burgers, 23 percent for egg dishes, and 20 percent for frozen meals.

#### Key findings from the nutrition questions

- Most consumers are familiar with the Nutrition Facts label – 87 percent of respondents have looked at the NFL on food packages. The top four items that consumers look for on the label are Calories, Total Sugar, Sodium, and Serving Size. Consumers report using the label most frequently for seeing “how high or low the food is in things like calories, salt, vitamins, or fat,” “for getting a general idea of the nutritional content of the food,” and “to compare different food items with each other.”
- Consumers are familiar with food package claims – More than 80 percent of respondents have seen claims such as “No added sugar,” “Whole grain,” “Organic,” “Gluten-free,” “Low fat,” “No artificial ingredients,” “Low sugar,” and “No artificial colors.”
- Most consumers have seen menu labeling at restaurants – Most respondents, 70 percent reported that they have seen calorie information on menus and menu boards. Of those who have seen such information, 53 percent reported using the calorie information, and most often indicated using it to avoid ordering high-calorie menu items.

## China evaluates food safety law



A project in China has found the country improved its food safety control system from 2009 to 2019 and food did become safer.

China launched the food safety indicator pilot project in 2019, a decade after the food safety law came into force, to assess its effectiveness.

During a kick-off workshop, six indicators were selected from 40 listed by FAO Asia Pacific and five technical working groups were established to work on them.

Indicators help analyze existing systems, standards and frameworks, identify areas for improvement and determine the future direction for food safety in China, according to a project report.

One of the indicators looked at Salmonella and Listeria in raw and cooked meat

and reported outbreaks caused by the two pathogens in meat products. Contamination by Salmonella and Listeria of raw meat, from 2009 to 2018, was getting better, which experts said could be because of stricter regulation and monitoring.

The overall contamination rate of Salmonella in fresh meat was higher than that of Listeria monocytogenes. This was the opposite way around for cooked meat products. After 2015, the contamination rate of Salmonella in fresh meat and Listeria in cooked meat products declined.

Experts said industry should intensify prevention in slaughterhouses and further processing, government regulators should strengthen law enforcement, and consumer awareness on handling of meat needs to be improved.

Other indicators focused on water quality, risk analysis ability, the notification system for food safety incidents and outbreaks, and structure of the national control system in the country.

China has the largest population in the world and is one of the largest food exporters and importers.

A guide has already been published after several countries in the Asia Pacific region asked the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to help them develop food safety indicators.

Future work will look at the other indicators and development of a food safety index for China, officials said.

## Review details traceability issues in supply chains



A review has found only a few examples of supply chains with full traceability.

In a report, commissioned by Lloyd's Register Foundation, RS Standards looked at the impact of traceability on the safety of food. The evidence that improved traceability leads to safer food systems is commonly accepted, said the authors.

The review focused on the seafood, beef, dairy, baking, cereal and spice industries to identify food safety risks and how different traceability technologies were being used. GS1 and sector specific standards were found to provide a framework to ensure key information is recorded consistently.

It sets out different traceability techniques and the gaps, limitations, benefits, and risks associated with them. Four types of technologies were identified; software, Internet of Things (IoT), food sensing technologies, and physical testing. IoT requires hardware and software, regular internet access and

investment. Blockchain-based traceability systems need software, bespoke development and tailoring to supply chains, and specialized skills to set up.

### Simple and complex networks

Examples of supply chains with full chain traceability were all high-value and premium products, such as grass-fed beef and line caught tuna. They were relatively simple supply chains, which generally present less risk, and where one company controlled the whole chain.

Challenges exist with more complex supply chains that have many intermediaries, a multi-ingredient nature or where items are transported as a bulk commodity such as grains and cereals. One problem is commercial interests restricting data access.

The review acknowledged traceability is a very broad term and defined full chain traceability as using technology to provide information for all stages involved in the development of a product.

One of the obstacles in using digital tools in many ingredient-producing parts of the world is limited infrastructure and a lack of technology. A challenge for industry is to develop traceability solutions that can be used in facilities where work is seasonal and workers may have low digital literacy. Small-scale producers will need training on how to use technology as well as support with upfront capital and ongoing operating costs, according to the report.

Food traceability was one of three focus areas for the foundation following its Foresight Review of Food Safety in 2019. Evidence in the report came from a desk-based review and discussions with traceability experts and technology providers. A previous report covered food safety training.

## EU Commission assesses food safety in potential member states

There were pesticide residue problems in Turkey, continued high aflatoxin in

“It is imperative that we ensure the credibility and bring new life to the accession process. If our partners deliver on reforms, the EU also needs to deliver on progress in its negotiations,” he said.



Turkey needs to make further progress to meet EU standards, particularly on pesticide residues, found the report.

The capacity for official controls was improved but no progress was made on developing the national plan for upgrading agri-food establishments. The EU Commission said significant work was still needed to apply the new rules on registering and approving food establishments.

The number of Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) reports for pesticide residues in fruits and vegetables imported from Turkey into the EU remained unacceptably high, especially in 2020 when new standards on chlorpyrifos and chlorpyrifos-methyl became applicable, according to the assessment.

Alignment of food safety rules with the EU advanced on issues such as labeling, additives and purity criteria, flavorings, food supplements and enzymes but is yet to be ensured for novel food and genetically modified organisms.

In the coming year, Turkey should upgrade food establishments to meet EU standards, and submit a national program, make progress in meeting EU pesticide residue maximum limits with a monitoring plan, and make further progress in addressing zoonoses. There was some progress though with implementation of the country's Salmonella control program.

#### Risk-based imports issue in Serbia

Serbia advanced food safety by recruiting staff at national reference laboratories and drafted an action plan on fisheries.

While rules on monitoring programs were adopted for food of animal and plant origin, Serbia must improve its risk-based approach for imports, and consider electronic exchange of data and documentation where possible, according to the report. The country has not yet audited inspection staff and integrated multiannual control plans are yet to be prepared.

The allowed level of aflatoxins in milk remains five times higher than that permitted by the EU. There was no progress on genetically modified organisms.

In the next year, Serbia should adopt a strategy and action plan for alignment, implementation and enforcement of EU food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy; step up efforts on the sustainable management of pesticides and improve its risk-based approach to official controls for imports.

#### Progress in North Macedonia

In the reporting period, good progress was made in food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy in North Macedonia.

The Food and Veterinary Agency (FVA) developed a food safety strategy for 2021 to 2025. The national RASFF, as well as the agency's internal audit and training systems, are operational. The authority is also trying to protect consumers by providing information about preventing food fraud associated with e-commerce.

Legislation was aligned with the EU on food information, flavorings, enzymes, food additives, food for particular nutritional uses, food contact materials, and the maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs. FVA continued a program for monitoring food safety, but the data needs further analysis, said the report.

In the coming year, there is a need to strengthen the capacities for data collection, verification and analysis of the Food and Veterinary Agency; improve the functioning and reliability of the Animal Identification and Registration System; and take action to achieve a sustainable use of pesticides.

## Singapore plans changes to food safety licensing system



The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) is to change how it ranks food outlets to focus more on track records than annual audit results.

The new licensing framework is called the Safety Assurance for Food Establishments (SAFE). An estimated 23,000 food sites will come under it beginning in January 2023.

Those that have demonstrated a good record of food safety assurance and have systems to ensure better safety standards will be eligible for longer licenses and higher award tiers.

Currently, establishments are graded either 'A', 'B', 'C' or 'D' based on an annual assessment of food safety performance. A change to this system was announced in 2020.

In the SAFE program, outlets will be given bronze, silver or gold awards. Those that have a good track record, so no major food safety lapses over two, five or 10 years, and can meet other requirements, will qualify for the awards, which correspond to a 10 (gold), five (silver), or three (bronze) year license. New licensees or those with less than two years without a major issue will be given a one year license.

Examples of lapses include causing a foodborne outbreak, being convicted in court for offences against SFA's regulations, or a suspension of the license.

Time to prepare

Establishments will be told in 2022 of their level based on their history of food safety assurance.

There are three categories of food establishments. Those in category A and B involve significant or moderate food handling practices such as caterers and bakeries while those in category C involve minimal food handling like supermarkets.

SFA has created a training program of four levels known as the Food Safety Courses. The breadth and depth of the curriculum increases as trainee's progress.

Tan Lee Kim, deputy chief executive officer at SFA, said industry must also play a role in maintaining good food safety standards.

"The new SAFE framework takes into account the ongoing performance of food establishments, compared to an annual grading audit which provides a snapshot reflection of a food establishment's food safety and hygiene standards. This is a better representation of the food establishment's consistent efforts in

food safety assurance and can enable consumers to make better informed choices,” she said.

“SFA has engaged industry associations when developing the SAFE framework and have taken their feedback into consideration. We will continue to work closely with the industry for the smooth implementation of the SAFE framework, so that we can maintain consistently high food safety standards in Singapore.”

### Study suggests missed chances on Listeria prevention in sandwiches



Researchers have suggested opportunities are being missed to prevent listeriosis from pre-packed sandwiches.

Eating pre-prepared sandwiches served in hospitals was the most common source of Listeria infections in England and Wales between 1981 and 2015.

Scientists said repeated incidents, despite guidance on reducing the risk of

listeriosis in healthcare settings being available, shows lessons are not being learned, with risk factors having similarities to those described previously.

They made the comments as part of a study on a case of listeriosis associated with eating sandwiches in a hospital in 2017. This incident had also already been covered in another report.

A review of hospital food was published in 2020 after a Listeria outbreak in England in 2019 that killed seven people was traced to sandwiches. It made five food safety recommendations including every trust must have a nominated specialist and raising standards of audits for high-risk food manufacturers.

Patient ate company's sandwiches a dozen times

In July 2017, a case of listeriosis in a 53-year-old man in a hospital in Yorkshire and Humber Region was reported to Public Health England. Analysis by whole genome sequencing of the Listeria monocytogenes from his blood was genetically indistinguishable to isolates from sandwiches collected in December 2016 and produced by a company that had one site in the same region. Whilst in hospital, the patient was given sandwiches made by this company 12 times.

No other cases infected by this Listeria type were detected in the UK between 2016 and 2020.

Contamination of products from the company was detected during unrelated microbiological monitoring of food and predated the investigation of the sick person by 18 months, according to the study published in the journal Epidemiology and Infection.

The business was an approved manufacturer producing sandwiches and salads to a range of premises including the National Health Service throughout England.

The company sent, on average, 12,600 salads and sandwiches per day to health care environments but stopped supplying the NHS in September 2019 for “commercial” reasons.

#### Efforts to investigate and control contamination

Between 2016 and 2020, more than 3,000 samples of food, ingredients and environmental swabs from the company were tested. *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination rates declined after July 2017 from 31 percent to 0.3 percent for salads and 3 percent to zero for sandwiches. The pathogen was found in salads with beef, pork and cheese as well as tuna, egg, mayonnaise and chicken sandwiches.

Results represent persistent contamination of equipment, food contact surfaces and foods at the manufacturer by a single *Listeria monocytogenes* strain, said researchers.

A total of 168 finished foods made by the company were collected from two hospitals in 2016 as part of routine microbiological monitoring. *Listeria monocytogenes* was isolated from eight samples and other *Listeria* species from 13 but all were under 20 colony forming units per gram (cfu/g).

In December 2016, the local authority inspected the company and collected five sandwiches. *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Listeria seeligeri* were detected at below 20 cfu/g in two egg mayonnaise sandwich samples.

Samples from the two hospitals between January and June 2017 found *Listeria monocytogenes* in 31 of 101 salads tested and none of 104 sandwiches, all at under 20 cfu/g except for a quiche lorraine salad which was at 20 cfu/g. *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination rates in the second half of 2017 were 26 of 230 salads and three of 238 sandwiches positive. Contamination rates for 2018 and

2019 were 11 of 444 and one of 277 for salads and five of 471 to none of 399 for sandwiches.

*Listeria monocytogenes* contamination rates in salads and sandwiches collected from the hospitals and the company’s factory declined from July 2017 after the incident and when control measures were implemented. Contamination with other species of *Listeria* increased between 2017 and 2018 in foods at the hospitals and for sandwiches from the firm but declined in 2019 and 2020.

Swabs of drains and a water sample from a vegetable washer showed contamination between July 2017 and July 2019 with the *Listeria monocytogenes* type associated with the infected person. A second *Listeria monocytogenes* strain was detected twice in August 2017 from a drain swab and the butter depositor but was not recovered from any foods or ingredients or from other cases of listeriosis in the UK.

#### Impact of testing decisions

*Listeria seeligeri* was recovered in environmental swabs at the production site 14 times between June 2018 and July 2019; from four salads in September and October 2017; and from 24 sandwiches between December 2016 and August 2019. It was also detected from 94 foods at the two hospitals. *Listeria welshimeri* was found in the production area between October and December 2019 and *Listeria innocua* was also detected.

*Listeria monocytogenes* had not been detected in any samples that the company sent to a commercial UKAS ISO 17025 accredited laboratory in the first half of 2017.

Environmental health officers visited the company in July and August 2017 and found procedures were adequate but some changes to layout to expand the

production area had recently been implemented. There were concerns including sanitization systems for vegetable washing machines, trolley wheel disinfection before moving from low to high-risk areas and shoe changing procedures. There was evidence of floor-level drainage from a low to high-risk area with a build-up of debris.

Food and environmental samples were taken. While the company's private lab didn't detect *Listeria monocytogenes* the PHE Food, Water and Environmental lab in York did. It was not possible to investigate the reason for this discrepancy, although it may be because of test sensitivity, according to the study.

### Salmonella top cause of foodborne outbreaks in Australia



Salmonella dominated reported outbreaks in Australia in 2016 causing several large incidents, according to a study published recently.

A total of 177 foodborne outbreaks were reported affecting 3,639 people, with

at least 348 hospital admissions and four deaths. A food vehicle was identified in 109 outbreaks, researchers report.

Salmonella was the most frequently-identified agent in outbreaks in 2016, responsible for 73 incidents and more than 2,000 illnesses with almost 300 hospitalizations, according to the study published in the latest edition of the Communicable Diseases Intelligence journal.

A previous article covered Australia's annual surveillance report of notifiable diseases for 2016.

The three largest outbreaks were Salmonella Anatum associated with bagged salads with 311 sick, Salmonella Saintpaul traced to mung bean sprouts affecting 419 people and a Salmonella Typhimurium outbreak linked to a bakery with 202 cases. Salmonella Typhimurium was the most commonly identified serotype with 64 Salmonella outbreaks in 2016.

A Salmonella Hvitittingfoss outbreak affected 144 people in six states. Half of the patients were younger than 5 years old and almost a quarter were over the age of 65. South Australian authorities detected Salmonella Hvitittingfoss and other serovars on retail samples of rockmelon, also known as cantaloupe, from the implicated grower.

"These outbreaks highlight the risks associated with fresh raw produce and the ongoing need for producers, retailers and consumers to implement strategies to reduce potential Salmonella contamination," said researchers.

Eggs frequently implicated

Eggs continue to be a source of Salmonella Typhimurium infection across the country: 35 egg-related outbreaks, affecting 510 people with 89 hospitalizations,

were reported across six jurisdictions in 2016. The largest incident was linked to scrambled eggs and affected 143 people.

Egg-related outbreaks mainly resulted from consuming food prepared at a restaurant, followed by a private residence. Thirteen of them were associated with eggs in desserts, including tiramisu, chocolate mousse and fried ice cream.

Ten outbreaks were linked to consumption of egg-based sauces and dressings such as mayonnaise, aioli and hollandaise sauce. Other implicated egg-containing vehicles included breakfast dishes and milkshakes.

Seafood, including fish, mollusks and crustaceans, was implicated as the source in 25 outbreaks. They were caused by ciguatoxin 14 times, scombrototoxin on four occasions and twice each by norovirus and *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.

Restaurants were the top food preparation setting, accounting for 82 foodborne outbreaks and 1,338 ill people reported as part of outbreaks in 2016.

#### Other causes of outbreaks

Fifteen norovirus outbreaks sickened 511 people while 14 Ciguatoxin outbreaks affected 56 people.

Ten *Campylobacter* outbreaks involved 100 people; 87 were sick in six *Clostridium perfringens* epidemics. Nine patients were recorded in four scombrototoxin events.

Two *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* outbreaks sickened 20 people and two *Shigella* ones affected 10 people. One *Staphylococcus aureus* outbreak affected 24 people and another caused by *Bacillus Cereus* made 20 people sick. There was no mention of *E. coli*. A total of 48 incidents were caused by an unknown agent.

Eight patients were recorded in a *Listeria* outbreak. Of seven cases interviewed, all consumed cold meats, cheeses and/or salads from various deli counters in the four weeks prior to onset. Food samples and environmental swabs isolated *Listeria monocytogenes* with the same genetic profile from three supermarket delicatessens and from a ham production facility in New South Wales that distributed products to various supermarkets implicated by cases.

#### UK Salmonella pork scratching outbreak sickens 500



More than 500 people in the United Kingdom have been affected by a *Salmonella* outbreak linked to pork scratching products.

There were 534 sick people as of late October with the majority falling ill since June. The first patient was in September 2020 and the peak was 80 cases reported in one week.

Slightly more than half are male with an age range of 0 to 92 years old and a

median of 54. A dozen were admitted to hospital but this information is only available for 35 people. The majority of those sick are in England but some patients live in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Whole genome sequencing identified the genetically similar Salmonella Infantis cases. It is thought to be the largest outbreak of this Salmonella type ever reported in Europe.

#### Cases despite recall

In late August, the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland advised consumers not to eat several pork scratching products purchased since February, which were linked to Salmonella poisoning. At that time, the agencies reported 179 people were sick.

Tayto Group's recall included some Mr. Porky, Jay's and The Real Pork Crackling Company products. Production was halted at the implicated factory once a possible link was identified. Cases have reduced but continue to be reported despite the product recall. Items have best before dates up to and including Feb. 19, 2022.

Microbiological investigations identified isolates matching the outbreak strain at the production site and in an unopened product from the day of inspection.

Tayto Group, who also distributes to the EU and other countries, voluntarily suspended production and withdrew and recalled products as well as doing enhanced cleaning and microbiological testing.

The original cause of contamination has not been determined with FSA traceback work including looking at pork rind supplied from three countries.

#### Affected people seek answers

Earlier this month, law firm Irwin Mitchell said it was working on behalf of eight people who believe they fell ill after eating Mr Porky products.

These include a man from Malton, North Yorkshire, who was hospitalized and diagnosed with Salmonella Infantis after eating pork scratchings, and a retired elite swimmer from Merseyside.

A woman is also still suffering from the effects of salmonellosis. Susan Williamson, from Blackhall Colliery, was taken to hospital and diagnosed with Salmonella Infantis infection. The 64-year-old had eaten pork scratchings. After undergoing further tests she was diagnosed with heart failure and wants to find out if this is linked to the Salmonella infection. Doctors told her she will need ongoing care and a procedure on her heart.

Williamson said when she fell ill after eating the pork scratchings she thought it would only make her sick for a few days.

"Never did I ever imagine that it would lead to Salmonella and I would still be suffering more than two months on. I'm still very unwell now and have been told I'll need medical care for a long time. It's been such a traumatic time for me and my family," she said.

"It's also very worrying to think that there could be more people out there suffering like I am, and we deserve to have some answers as to how this happened. I know an investigation can't change what I'm going through, but at the very least it can hopefully help prevent it happening to others in the future."

## European Commission authorizes migratory locust for human consumption



The European Commission has authorized *Locusta migratoria* (migratory locust) as a novel food to be placed on the market.

This is the second authorization of an insect as a novel food — the first being dried yellow mealworms, which was adopted in July.

The term “migratory locust” refers to the adult *Locusta migratoria*, an insect species that belongs to the Acrididae family. It will be available in the form of frozen, dried and powder and is intended to be marketed as a snack or a food ingredient in a number of food products.

This authorization comes after a scientific assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) which concluded that migratory locust is safe under the uses submitted by the applicant company.

Novel foods can only be authorized if they do not pose any risk to human health, otherwise the approval would not have been submitted by the Commission to the Member States.

EFSA concluded that the consumption of the migratory locust may potentially lead to allergic reactions. This may particularly be the case in people with pre-existing allergies to crustaceans, dust mites and molluscs. Additionally, allergens from the feed, including, may end up in the insect that is consumed.

Therefore, the authorization of this novel food clarifies this issue and lays down specific labelling requirements regarding allergenicity.

In the frozen and dried forms, legs and wings have to be removed by the food business operator to reduce the risk of intestinal constipation.

In various studies, the Food and Agriculture Organization has identified insects as a highly nutritious and healthy food source with high fat, protein, vitamin, fibre and mineral content.

Insects, which are consumed daily by millions of people on the planet, were identified under the Farm to Fork Strategy as an alternative protein source that could facilitate the shift toward a more sustainable food system.

## Enterprise News

### USDA issues public alert over salame sticks connected to *Salmonella* outbreak

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service is issuing a public health alert because Euro Food of Freeland, PA, produced

ready-to-eat Italian-style salami stick products that may be contaminated with Salmonella.

The alert is connected to an outbreak linked to Citterio brand Premium Italian-Style Salame Sticks sold at Trader Joe's and other grocery stores.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention late Saturday announced a multistate outbreak involving 21 Salmonella illnesses in eight states with three hospitalizations. It has not resulted in any deaths.

A recall was not requested because FSIS has not identified a specific contaminated lot or lots, and it is believed that potentially affected products are no longer available to be directly purchased by retail consumers.

The Italian-style salami stick items were produced prior to Oct. 25, 2021.



The following product is subject to the public health alert:

- 2-oz packages containing Citterio “Premium Italian-Style Salame Sticks ALL NATURAL” with “best by” dates up to January 23, 2022, located next to the barcode.

The products subject to the public health alert bear establishment number “EST. 4010” inside the USDA mark of inspection. These items were shipped to retail locations nationwide and exported to Bermuda.

FSIS is concerned that some products may be in consumers’ refrigerators or freezers.

Consumers who have purchased the products are urged not to consume them. These products should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase.

About Salmonella infections

Food that is contaminated with Salmonella bacteria usually does not look, smell or taste spoiled. Anyone can become sick with a Salmonella infection, but infants, children, seniors, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of serious illness because their immune systems are fragile, according to the CDC.

Anyone who has eaten any of the products listed above and developed symptoms of Salmonella infection should seek medical attention. Sick people should tell their doctors about the possible exposure to Salmonella bacteria because special tests are necessary to diagnose salmonellosis. Salmonella infection symptoms can mimic other illnesses, frequently leading to misdiagnosis.

Symptoms of Salmonella infection can include diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and fever within 12 to 72 hours after eating contaminated food. Otherwise healthy

adults are usually sick for four to seven days. In some cases, however, diarrhea may be so severe that patients need to be hospitalized.

Older adults, children, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems, such as cancer patients, are more likely to develop a severe illness and serious, sometimes life-threatening conditions.

It is possible for some people to be infected with the bacteria and to not get sick or show any symptoms, but to still be able to spread the infection to others.

### Warning after counterfeit Nestlé coffee found in Germany



A counterfeit version of Nestlé branded coffee has been found on sale in Germany and may contain foreign objects.

Nestlé Deutschland reported the product was packaged in a glass jar that looked like an old version of Nescafé Gold. There are also concerns it may contain

broken glass and plastic.

The food firm said it had not manufactured or distributed the implicated product and had not used this shape of glass for Nescafé Gold for years and it is not commercially available.

The counterfeit product is known to have been sold at weekly markets and smaller shops but other details about the incident remain unclear. It has an EAN code of 405500210900, batch number 60820814B1 9:15 and best before date of 10-21.

People who have purchased a counterfeit pack are advised to inform the police and stop consuming the coffee.

Nestlé has contacted the relevant authorities and urged them to investigate and stop the fraud.

“We are shocked by this criminal activity and deeply condemn the fact that our brand has been illegally counterfeited and marketed. The quality and safety of our products is our top priority,” said a company statement.

### FDA reports Walmart, other stores received onions linked to outbreak

The Food and Drug Administration has released a partial list of retail establishments that may have sold onions from Mexico that have been implicated in an ongoing outbreak of Salmonella Oranienburg.

However, the list may not be accurate, according to the agency.

“This list represents the best information currently available to the FDA; however, it may not include all retail establishments that have received the recalled product or may include retail establishments that did not actually

receive the recalled product,” the FDA’s outbreak update states.

The FDA reports that the onions were distributed in AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, NC, NE, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VA and WI, as well as Ontario and Quebec, Canada.

In addition to checking the retailers list — which includes a number of Walmart stores along with other retailers — the FDA is urging consumers to check any onions they have on hand to see if they are from Mexico. It is believed the implicated onions came from the Mexican state of Chihuahua, but packaging likely just says Mexico if a place of origin is indicated.

If consumers cannot determine whether they have onions from Mexico that were purchased in recent weeks, they should throw them away or return them to the place of purchase. The FDA update says onions can last for three months or more, depending on storage conditions.

As of Oct. 29, the outbreak had sickened at least 808 people across 37 states and Puerto Rico. For 505 people with the information available, 157, or 31 percent, have required hospitalization, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. No one has died.

### **Heinz Kraft expands recall; Tang, Arizona Tea now on list because of glass, metal**

Following recalls in the U.S. and Canada, Heinz Kraft is now recalling 41 of its Arizona Tea, Tang, Country Time and Kool-Aid from the marketplace because of the potential of small glass or metal in the products.

The “best when used by” dates stretch into November of 2023, according to a company recall notice posted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The

notice says the glass and metal pieces may have been introduced during the production of the products.

“The issue was first discovered during an internal review at the manufacturing facility. The company is actively working with retail partners and distributors to remove potentially impacted product from circulation,” according to a statement from Heinz Kraft.

“Consumers who purchased these items, listed below, should not consume the product and can either return it to the store where it was purchased, or discard it.”

Consumers can contact Kraft Heinz at U.S. Consumer Relations at 855-713-9237 and Canada Consumer Relations at 855-268-1775.



To determine whether they have any of the products in their homes, they can use the following label information.

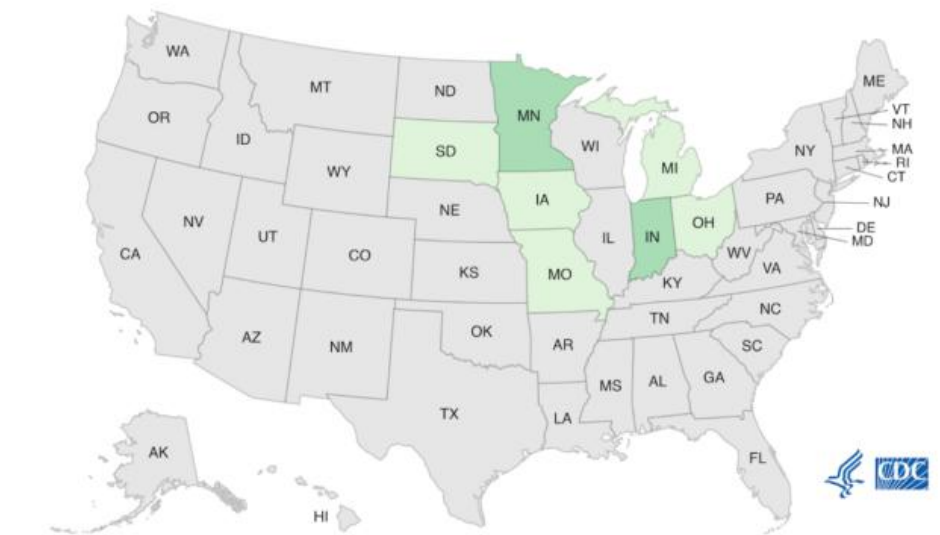
## MARKET NEWS

Product Size	Name of Product	Individual Best Before Date	Package through	Individual Package UPC		Lemonade		
73 oz	Arizona Arnold Palmer	08/05/23	through 09/10/23	043000086643	72 oz	Tang Orange	8/21/2023 through 9/20/23	043000032268
82.5oz	Country Time Lemonade	8/6/2023	through 10/22/23	043000928608	72 oz	Tang Orange	8/22/2023 through 9/28/23	043000032268
63 oz	Country Time Lemonade	8/8/2023	through 9/6/23	043000082195	82.5 oz	82.5Z Country Time HLF&HLF 34 QT/6	8/24/23	043000046012
58.9 oz	Tang Orange	8/11/2023	through 10/04/23	043000082171	82.5 oz	Kool- Aid Tropical Punch	8/31/2023 through 10/06/23	043000957400
63oz.	Kool- Aid Tropical Punch	8/12/2023	through 9/22/23	043000082164	63 oz	Country Time Pink Lemonade	9/6/2023 through 9/7/23	043000082188
82.5oz.	Kool- Aid Tropical Punch	8/18/2023	through 9/22/23	043000957400	63 oz	Kool-Aid Strawberry Cherry	10/2/23	043000082201
82.5oz	Kool-Aid Tropical Punch	8/17/2023	through 10/05/23	043000957400	20 oz	Kool- Aid Raspberry Lemonade	8/5/2023 through 10/18/23	043000954072
82.5oz	Country Time Pink Lemonade	8/20/2023	through 9/27/23	043000928615	20 oz	Tang Orange	8/6/2023 through 10/23/23	043000032275
82.5oz	Country Time Pink Lemonade	8/20/23		043000928615	20 oz	Tang Orange	5/15/2023 through 10/22/23	043000032275
82.5oz	Country Time Pink	9/17/23		043000928615	19 oz	Kool-Aid Cherry	8/9/23	043000953532
					18 oz	Tang Guava Pineapple	8/13/23	043000064511

## MARKET NEWS

19 oz	Country Time Lemonade	8/11/2023 through 09/11/23	043000951170		Drink Sugar Sweetened Lemonade, pack of 4	8/10/23	
19 oz	Country Time Pink Lemonade	8/30/2023 through 9/13/23	043000951149	19 oz	Country Time Lemonade Drink Mix, 6 pack case	6/20/2023 through 8/12/23	043000951170
19 oz	Kool- Aid Tropical Punch	6/12/2023 through 10/20/23	043000953501	2.4 kg	Country Time Original Lemonade	9/15/23	661880533800
19 oz	19Z Countrty Time HALF&HALF 8QT/12	9/13/2023 through 9/14/23	043000046005	2.2 kg	Tang Orange	8/20/2023 through 8/21/23	661880575900
19oz	Kool-Aid Tropical Punch	8/31/2023 through 10/19/23	043000953501	82.5 oz	EXPORT 82.5Z SSKA TROP PNCH 6	8/18/23	4300001464
19 oz	Kool-Aid Strawberry	10/18/2023 through 10/19/23	043000953556	20 oz	EXPORT 20Z TANG ORNG 6QT 12	8/9/23	430000322700
6.7 oz	Country Time “on the go” Lemonade 10 pack	9/20/2023 through 10/04/23	43000010983	19 oz	EXPORT 19Z KA CHRY SS 8QT KOREA EXP 12	8/8/2023 through 8/9/23	430000341600
6.6 oz	Kool -Aid Tropical Punch “on the go” 10 pack	10/19/2023 through 11/01/23	043000023464	19 oz	EXPORT 19Z CT HALF&HALF 8QT/12	9/14/23	430000460000
63oz.	63oz Kool- Aid Twin pack Tropical Punch	8/16/2023 through 8/17/23	043000089712	82.5 oz	EXPORT 82.5Z CT HLF&HLF 34 QT/6	8/24/23	430000460100
29 oz	Country Time Lemonade 12 qt	8/10/23	043000951194	19 oz	EXPORT 19Z SSKA TROP PNCH 12	9/5/2023 through 9/6/23	430009535000
116oz.	Country Time Powdered Soft	5/10/2023 through	043000075388				

## E. coli outbreak traced to organic spinach; product was distributed nationwide



Officials are investigating a new E. Coli O157:H7 outbreak that is linked to two brands of prepackaged baby spinach. The FDA is investigating farms linked to the spinach.

“One case reported eating Josie’s Organics organic baby spinach purchased from HyVee, and the other case reported Fresh Thyme organic baby spinach purchased from Fresh Thyme. Both brands are produced by Braga Fresh,” according to Minnesota public health officials.

The outbreak spans seven states so far and has sickened at least 10 people. Of eight people with the information available, two have been so sick that they had to be admitted to hospitals. No deaths have been reported, according to an outbreak announcement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Josie’s Organics reports distributing the spinach nationwide to retailers. A package of the implicated spinach had a best-by date of Oct. 23. The CDC did not report whether other best-by dates are involved. The CDC did not post any product photographs.

Whole genome sequencing of samples from patients matched, indicating a common source of contamination.

“Minnesota officials found E. coli O157:H7 in a package of leftover Josie’s Organics baby spinach collected from a sick person’s home. Five people in this outbreak (out of six interviewed) reported eating spinach in the week before they got sick and one reported Josie’s Organics brand,” according to the CDC.

“Investigators are working to determine if additional products may be contaminated.”

The FDA is tracing back the supply of the baby spinach in the positive product sample. Thus far, FDA has traced supply chains for this product back to a small number of farms in two different geographic regions and is deploying investigators along the supply chains of interest, according to an FDA update.

As of this morning the Food and Drug Administration had not reported any recalls related to the outbreak. It is not uncommon for there to be no recalls during outbreaks related to leafy greens because of their short shelf life and the length of time it takes to identify an outbreak.

The CDC reports that the confirmed patients became ill between Oct. 15 and 27. They range in age from 2 to 71 years old. Seventy percent of the sick people are female.

More patients are likely to be identified because of the length of time it takes for

confirmation testing and reporting to federal officials, which can take more than a month in some cases.

#### About E. coli infections

Anyone who has eaten any of the implicated spinach and developed symptoms of E. coli infection should seek medical attention and tell their doctor about their possible exposure to the bacteria. Specific tests are required to diagnose the infections, which can mimic other illnesses.

The symptoms of E. coli infections vary for each person but often include severe stomach cramps and diarrhea, which is often bloody. Some patients may also have a fever. Most patients recover within five to seven days. Others can develop severe or life-threatening symptoms and complications, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

About 5 percent to 10 percent of those who are diagnosed with E. coli infections develop a potentially life-threatening kidney failure complication, known as hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). Symptoms of HUS include fever, abdominal pain, feeling very tired, decreased frequency of urination, small unexplained bruises or bleeding, and pallor.

Many people with HUS recover within a few weeks, but some suffer permanent injuries or die. This condition can occur among people of any age but is most common in children younger than 5 years old because of their immature immune systems; older adults because of deteriorating immune systems; and people with compromised immune systems such as cancer patients.

People who experience HUS symptoms should seek emergency medical care immediately. People with HUS should be hospitalized because it can cause other serious and ongoing problems such as hypertension, chronic kidney disease,

brain damage and neurologic problems.

#### Dole recalls bagged salads from 10 states because of positive listeria test



Dole Fresh Vegetables Inc. is recalling garden salads because of possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.

This recall is being issued because of a sample of garden salad which yielded a positive result for *Listeria monocytogenes* in a random sample test conducted by the Department of Agriculture in Georgia, according to the company's recall notice posted by the Food and Drug Administration.

Consumers are advised to check products they have in their homes and discard any product matching these lot and UPC codes and Best if Used By dates.

The implicated products were distributed in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and

Virginia.

Recalled products:

Product Description	Lot Codes	UPC Code	Best If Used By
24 oz Dole™ Garden Salad	N28205A and N28205B	0-71430-01136-2	10-25-21
24 oz Marketside™ Classic Salad	N28205A and N28205B	6-81131-32895-1	10-25-21
12 oz Kroger™ Brand Garden Salad	N28211A and N28211B	0-11110-91036-3	10-25-21
12 oz Salad Classics™ Garden Salad	N28211A and N28211B	6-88267-18443-7	10-25-21

The lot code and “Best if Used By” date are located on the upper right corner of the bags and the UPC code is located on the bottom left corner of the back of the bags.

As of the posting of the recall notice, no illnesses connected to any of the recalled lot codes have been reported.

About Listeria infections

Food contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes may not look or smell spoiled but can still cause serious and sometimes life-threatening infections. Anyone who has consumed any recalled product and developed symptoms of Listeria infection should seek medical treatment and tell their doctors about the possible Listeria exposure. Specific tests are required to diagnose the infections, which

can mimic other illnesses.

Also, anyone who has consumed any of the recalled products should monitor themselves for the food poisoning symptoms during the coming weeks because it can take up to 70 days after exposure to Listeria for symptoms of listeriosis to develop.

Symptoms of Listeria infection can include vomiting, nausea, persistent fever, muscle aches, severe headache, and neck stiffness. Specific laboratory tests are required to diagnose Listeria infections, which can mimic other illnesses.

Pregnant women, the elderly, young children, and people such as cancer patients who have weakened immune systems are particularly at risk of serious illnesses, life-threatening infections, and other complications. Although infected pregnant women may experience only mild, flu-like symptoms, their infections can lead to premature delivery, infection of the newborn, or even stillbirth.

## MARKET NEWS - REPLY

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