



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

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NEWS RELEASE--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Recalled Cantaloupe Were Distributed in Southeast Idaho

Idaho public health officials learned that 43,000 pounds of cantaloupes possibly contaminated with *Listeria* were shipped to southeast Idaho in late August and donated to the public.

The cantaloupes are part of a nationwide recall and were originally shipped from Jensen Farms of Colorado to Select Express, LLC, a food distribution company in Aberdeen. The melons were too ripe to be commercially sold, so Select Express donated the fruit between Aug. 28 and Sept. 2, prior to the discovery of the link between the cantaloupe and *Listeria*.

As of Monday, 72 people in 18 states have been infected with the bacteria as part of the outbreak and 13 people have died. On Sept. 14, Jensen Farms issued a recall for Rocky Ford cantaloupe due to a potential link between the fruit and a multi-state outbreak of *Listeriosis*.

Idaho public health officials are currently investigating one illness that may be linked to the national outbreak. A Jerome County woman in her 60s became ill with *Listeria* in early September. She was hospitalized, but has since recovered. Lab samples have been sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for confirmation. There have been no other cases reported in Idaho at this time.

Although it is assumed most of the donated cantaloupe has been consumed or disposed of, Idaho public health officials advise people to discard any remaining cantaloupe. People who have eaten the cantaloupe should watch for symptoms and seek medical attention if they occur within 70 days of eating the cantaloupe. Prompt antibiotic treatment of persons with *Listeriosis* can help curb the effects of infection. People who may have eaten the cantaloupe and currently feel well do not need to seek medical attention.

Listeria is unusual in that it can cause illness as soon as three days after consumption or as long as 70 days. On average, most people develop symptoms within 21 days of consumption of contaminated foods.

Listeria primarily affects older adults, pregnant women, newborns, and adults with weakened immune systems. Healthy people rarely become ill from Listeria infection, however, persons without these risk factors can also be affected.

Persons ill with Listeriosis usually have fever and muscle aches, sometimes preceded by diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms. Pregnant women typically experience only a mild, flu-like illness. However, infections during pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, or life-threatening infection of the newborn. For all ill persons, symptoms may include fever, muscle aches, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions.

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