

Editor's note: The Department of Health will keep updates posted on the homepage at www.nmhealth.org. Please also note photos of recalled product linked at bottom of this news release.

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Jensen Farms Recalls Cantaloupe Due to Possible Health Risk; Four New Mexico Cases Confirmed To Be Part of Outbreak

FROM FDA, NMDOH & NMED - September 14, 2011 - Jensen Farms, of Holly, CO is voluntarily recalling their shipments of Rocky Ford whole cantaloupe because they have the potential to be contaminated with *Listeria*. The company is working with the State of Colorado and the Federal Food & Drug Administration to inform consumers of this recall. *L. monocytogenes* is a bacterium that can contaminate foods and cause a mild non-invasive illness (called listerial gastroenteritis) or a severe, sometimes life-threatening, illness (called invasive listeriosis). Persons who have the greatest risk of experiencing listeriosis after consuming foods contaminated with *L. monocytogenes* are fetuses and neonates who are infected after the mother is exposed to *L. monocytogenes* during pregnancy, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems.

The whole cantaloupes in question were shipped between July 29th, 2011 and September 10th, 2011, and distributed to the following states: IL, WY, TN, UT, TX, CO, MN, KS, NM, NC, MO, NE, OK, AZ, NJ, NY, PA. The whole cantaloupes have a green and white sticker that reads: Product of USA- Frontera Produce-Colorado Fresh-Rocky Ford-Cantaloupe or a gray, yellow, and green sticker that reads: Jensen Farms-Sweet Rocky Fords. If the whole cantaloupe is unlabeled, please contact your retail store for sourcing information. Jensen Farms is requesting any consumer that may have one of these cantaloupes to please destroy the products.

The recall involves only whole cantaloupe shipped by Jensen Farms, and no other commodities are involved. Jensen Farms feels it is prudent to participate in the recall as the State of Colorado has stated (in their September 12th, 2011 press release) that people at a high risk for infection should not eat whole cantaloupe from the Rocky Ford growing region.

“Jensen Farms continues to stay committed to the highest levels of food safety and maintains many third party safety audits, as we have for many years. We continually look for ways to enhance our protocol,” said Ryan Jensen, partner at Jensen Farms. Jensen Farms is a 3rd generation family farm of the Holly, Colorado community.

Consumers with questions may contact Jensen Farms via email at recall@rfordcantaloupe.com or phone 1-800-267-4561 between the hours of 9am and 4pm MST.

The New Mexico Environmental Health Bureau has identified two macro-distributors of Jensen Farms cantaloupe in New Mexico: Basila Produce in Albuquerque & Wal-Mart Distribution in Los Lunas. Stores are in the process of removing the recalled cantaloupe and are taking additional precautions to properly dispose destroyed cantaloupe. State inspectors are also working with state distributors to identify other specific store locations where the recalled cantaloupe was shipped, and will work to have the product removed from store shelves, and have immediate areas thoroughly cleaned.

To date, the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) has identified ten patients hospitalized with Listeria infection in the last 3 weeks, including 3 fatalities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed by DNA fingerprinting tests that the first four New Mexico cases are part of the multi-state Listeriosis outbreak linked to cantaloupes from the Rocky Ford region of Colorado. Test results on the other cases are pending. The New Mexico Environment Department’s Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) issued a voluntary recall notice to state produce retailers yesterday, requesting that any cantaloupe grown in the Rocky Ford growing area of southern Colorado be pulled from store shelves.

New Mexico’s fatal cases include: a 93-year-old man from Bernalillo County, a 61-year-old female from Curry County, and a 63-year-old man from Bernalillo County. All other New Mexico cases have been or are currently hospitalized and come from Bernalillo, Chaves, Otero, De Baca, Valencia and Lea counties. The ill people range in age from the 43 to 96 and include 4 men and 6 women. Illness onset ranges from August 20th to early September.

DOH is advising that nobody eat cantaloupes involved in the nationwide recall, especially those at high risk for listeriosis (older adults, persons with weakened immune systems, newborns, and pregnant women). If you are unsure of a cantaloupe’s origins, the safest thing to do is to place it in a closed plastic bag and then in a sealed trash can.

Listeriosis, a serious infection usually caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*, is an important public health problem in the United States. A person with listeriosis usually has fever and muscle aches, often preceded by diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms. In addition to fever and muscle aches, symptoms can include headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions. Pregnant women with listeriosis 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.

Antibiotics given promptly can potentially cure the illness and prevent infection of a fetus. Even with prompt treatment, some *Listeria* infections result in death. If you feel sick with symptoms of *Listeria* and have consumed cantaloupe, please contact your healthcare provider immediately.

More information about this outbreak of Listeriosis and recommendations to reduce the risk of getting Listeriosis from food can be found on CDC's webpage:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/listeriosis/091211.html>

More information about the National Recall can be found at:

[RSS Feed for FDA Recalls Information](#)¹ [what's this?]²

[Photo: Product Labels](#)³

Recalled Product Photos Are Also Available on FDA's [Flickr Photostream](#).⁴

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