

FDA PRESS RELEASE

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FDA confirms *Listeria monocytogenes* on Jensen Farms' Rocky Ford-brand cantaloupes *Jensen Farms voluntarily recalled product last week in response to outbreak*

Today, the Food and Drug Administration announced that it found *Listeria monocytogenes* in samples of Jensen Farms' Rocky Ford-brand cantaloupe taken from a Denver-area store and on samples taken from equipment and cantaloupe at the Jensen Farms' packing facility. Tests confirmed that the *Listeria monocytogenes* found in the samples matches one of the three different strains of *Listeria monocytogenes* associated with the multi-state outbreak of listeriosis.

Jensen Farms recalled its Rocky Ford-brand cantaloupes on Sept. 14 in response to the multistate outbreak of listeriosis. Cantaloupes from other farms in Colorado, including farms in the Rocky Ford growing area, have not been linked to this outbreak. To date, the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention reports that 35 people in 10 states, including four deaths, have been infected with the outbreak strains of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

FDA investigators collected cantaloupes and environmental samples from a Denver-area store and from the Jensen Farms packing facility in Granada, Colo., after Colorado state health officials identified Jensen Farms' Rocky Ford-brand cantaloupes as the common food eaten by several listeriosis patients.

Jensen Farms, based in Holly, Colo., is cooperating with the FDA and state officials in Colorado. The company is working with federal and state authorities to ensure the recalled cantaloupes are promptly removed from the marketplace. Jensen Farms is also helping federal and state authorities determine the root cause of how the cantaloupes became contaminated. The FDA's root-cause investigation and environmental assessment includes the on-site expertise of FDA and state of Colorado microbiologists, environmental health specialists, veterinarians and investigative officers. The experts conducting the assessment will analyze the evidence, determine the most likely cause of contamination and identify potential controls to help prevent contamination in the future. The FDA will use the findings to help inform agency policy regarding *Listeria* and produce food safety best practices.

Jensen Farms shipped the recalled cantaloupes from July 29 through Sept. 10 to at least 17 states with possible further distribution.

The FDA advises consumers—especially persons at high risk for listeriosis, including older adults, persons with weakened immune systems and pregnant women—not to eat the recalled cantaloupes and to throw them away. Do not try to wash the harmful bacteria off the cantaloupe as contamination may be both on the inside and outside of the

cantaloupe. Cutting, slicing and dicing may also transfer harmful bacteria from the fruit's surface to the fruit's flesh.

For additional information about the recalled products, including product labels:
<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm271879.htm>.

For additional information about the outbreak:

- FDA warns consumers not to eat Rocky Ford Cantaloupes shipped by Jensen
 - Farms
 - <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm271634.htm>
 - CDC Investigation on multi-state listeriosis outbreak
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/listeriosis/091411.html>
 - FoodSafety.gov on Listeria
 - <http://www.foodsafety.gov/poisoning/causes/bacteriaviruses/listeria/>

The FDA, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, protects the public health by assuring the safety, effectiveness, and security of human and veterinary drugs, vaccines and other biological products for human use, and medical devices. The agency also is responsible for the safety and security of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, dietary supplements, products that give off electronic radiation, and for regulating tobacco products.

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