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and  
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To: Health Commissioners, Environmental Health Directors, Nursing Directors,  
ODA Food Safety Specialists, and Other Interested Parties

Subject: *FDA Warns Consumers Not to Eat Certain Mussel Products from Bantry Bay  
Seafood*

Date: August 18, 2008

**FDA Warns Consumers Not to Eat Certain Mussel Products from Bantry Bay  
Seafood**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers against eating certain frozen cooked mussel products made by Bantry Bay Seafoods, imported from Ireland, because they may be contaminated with azaspiracid toxins, a group of naturally occurring marine toxins known to cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramps.

Azaspiracid toxins are odorless, tasteless, and cannot be destroyed or neutralized by freezing or cooking, including boiling. Individuals who have experienced gastrointestinal symptoms such as those noted above after eating any of the products listed below should consult their health care professional. Symptoms typically occur within hours of consumption and persist for two to three days.

In July, two people in Washington state became ill after eating the company's "Mussels in a Garlic Butter Sauce." FDA tested unopened product from the same production lot and found that it contained the azaspiracid toxins.

Consumers should throw out the following Bantry Bay Seafood frozen cooked products with "Best before end" dates ranging from January 23, 2009, to November 15, 2009:

- Mussels in a Garlic Butter Sauce
- Mussels in White Wine Sauce
- Mussels in Tomato and Garlic Sauce

The "Best before end" dates are displayed on the side of the box in the following format: MM:DD:YY. Products to be thrown out are marked with dates 01:23:09 through 11:15:09.

These products are sold frozen in 1 pound cardboard packages in stores throughout the United States.

The FDA also recommends that retailers and foodservice operators remove these products, and any food in which these products were used as an ingredient, from sale or service.

Azaspiracid toxins were an unknown marine toxin until 1995, when they were identified and linked to an outbreak of foodborne illnesses associated with consumption of Irish shellfish. The toxins have since been identified in other shellfish from the west coast of Europe. They have never been detected in shellfish harvested from U.S. waters.

For more information, please visit the Web site for FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/list.html>.