



Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio Department of Health



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

Subject: Recall Announcement (ODA/ODH) 2008-53b

Date: August 14, 2008

NEBRASKA FIRM EXPANDS RECALL OF BEEF PRODUCTS DUE TO POSSIBLE *E. COLI* O157:H7 CONTAMINATION

Clarification: *This recall affects only certain products produced at the **Nebraska Beef Ltd.** company, located in Omaha. It does not relate, implicate, or otherwise affect beef in the State of Nebraska. Please note this important distinction.*

WASHINGTON,— Nebraska Beef, Ltd., an Omaha, Neb., establishment, is clarifying information from and expanding its recall announced on Aug. 8 of primal cuts, subprimal cuts and boxed beef to include such products bearing the company name "Nebraska Beef Ltd" that may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service announced today.

The total amount of product subject to recall is approximately 1.36 million pounds. The expansion of approximately 160,000 pounds and the clarifying information include:

- Primal cuts, subprimal cuts and boxed beef produced on June 24, whose shipping containers and labels bear the establishment number "EST. 19336" inside the USDA mark of inspection and the company name "Nebraska Beef Ltd" The products may or may not bear a green sticker.
- Primal cuts, subprimal cuts and boxed beef produced on July 8, whose shipping containers and labels bear the establishment number "EST. 19336" inside the USDA mark of inspection, the company name "Nebraska Beef Ltd." as well as a 2-inch plain, circular green sticker on one side of the shipping box.

Poundage of products bearing the green sticker were included in the 1.2 million pounds originally recalled, but were not identified in the product description with the company name "Nebraska Beef Ltd." in the Aug. 8 announcement.

FSIS has concluded that the production practices employed by Nebraska Beef, Ltd., on June 24 were insufficient to effectively control *E. coli* O157:H7. The products subject to the expansion may have been produced under insanitary conditions. The expansion was not prompted by foodborne illness investigations.

These products were sent to establishments and retail stores nationwide for further processing and will likely not bear the establishment number "EST. 19336" on products available for direct consumer purchase.

Consumers with questions about the recall should contact company Vice President of Administration James Timmerman at (402) 733-0456. Media with questions about the recall should contact company representative William Lamson at (402) 397-7300.

The problem prompting the recall announced on Aug. 8 was discovered through a joint investigation with state departments of health and agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and FSIS. As of Aug. 11, there were 26 culture-confirmed cases in 10 states and 1 culture-confirmed case in Canada identified as part of this outbreak. This count is based on continuing testing, analysis and investigation.

FSIS is continuing its investigation into any products that may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7 or that are associated with illnesses and will take appropriate action when necessary.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea, dehydration, and in the most severe cases, kidney failure. The very young, seniors and persons with weak immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness. Anyone with signs or symptoms of foodborne illness should consult a medical professional.

Consumers with food safety questions can "Ask Karen," the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at AskKaren.gov. The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

PREPARING GROUND BEEF FOR SAFE CONSUMPTION

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit

www.fsis.usda.gov

Wash hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat and poultry. Wash cutting boards, dishes and utensils with hot, soapy water. Immediately clean spills.

Keep raw meat, fish and poultry away from other food that will not be cooked. Use separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry and egg products and cooked foods.

Consumers should only eat ground beef or ground beef patties that have been cooked to a safe internal temperature of 160° F.

Color is NOT a reliable indicator that ground beef or ground beef patties have been cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* O157:H7.

The only way to be sure ground beef is cooked to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria is to use a thermometer to measure the internal temperature.

Refrigerate raw meat and poultry within two hours after purchase or one hour if temperatures exceed 90° F. Refrigerate cooked meat and poultry within two hours after cooking.