



NEWS RELEASE



Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Alaska Department of Health & Social Services

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Health Alert: Possible *E. coli* contamination in ground beef

Alaska Departments of Environmental Conservation and Health and Social Services urge public to check freezers for possible tainted product.

August 31, 2007 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that some shipments of ground beef sold in Alaska may be tainted with *E. coli* O157:H7. To date, eight confirmed cases have caused illnesses in the Pacific Northwest and one suspected case is being investigated in Alaska.

The products subject to this public health alert are:

- 16-ounce packages of “*Northwest Finest* 7% fat Natural Ground Beef.” The label bears a UPC code of “752907 600127.”
- 16-ounce packages of “*Northwest Finest* 10% fat, *Organic* Ground Beef.”

Each package bears the establishment number, “Est. 965,” inside the USDA mark of inspection, as well as a sell-by date between Aug. 1 and Aug. 11, 2007.

The ground beef products were produced between July 19 and July 30, 2007, and distributed to retail establishments in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Based on product shelf life, these products would not have been sold in grocery stores after Aug. 5. However, these products could be in consumers’ freezers. It is important that consumers look for and return these products if they find them.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. The very young, seniors and people with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to severe complications of this food-borne illness. Anyone experiencing any of these symptoms should contact a health-care provider immediately.

For additional information about this disease, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/>. Health-care providers and laboratories should report all suspected or confirmed cases of *E. coli* O157:H7 to the Alaska Section of Epidemiology at (907) 269-8000, or (800) 478-0084 after hours.

For more information about safe food handling, log onto the DEC Web site at:
<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss/foodborne/foodborne.htm>.

Photo of similar package:



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