

CLASS I RECALL
HEALTH RISK: HIGH

Congressional and Public Affairs
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MINNESOTA FIRM RECALLS GROUND BEEF PRODUCTS DUE TO POSSIBLE *E. COLI* O157:H7 CONTAMINATION

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12, 2008 – Rochester Meat Company, a Rochester, Minn., firm, is voluntarily recalling approximately 188,000 pounds of ground beef products because they may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service announced today.

The problem was discovered through an investigation initiated by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services and the California Department of Public Health into five illnesses in Wisconsin and one illness in California. Anyone concerned about an illness should contact a physician.

The ground beef products subject to recall were produced on Oct. 30, 2007, and Nov. 6, 2007. The products subject to recall were shipped to distributors nationwide for further distribution to restaurants and food service institutions. These products were not available for purchase by consumers in retail establishments.

The following products are subject to recall:

- 10-pound boxes of “SEASONED BEEF BULK” bearing a product number of “09068,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “730314.”
- 10-pound boxes of “100% PURE BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “09071,” as well as an eight-digit a lot number beginning with “731013.”
- 15-pound boxes of “CHEYENNE SEASONED BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “12017” or “12018,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “730314.”
- 10-, 15- and 20-pound boxes of “100% PURE GROUND BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “1340,” “127533,” “135724,” “158843” or “158852,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “731013” or “731014.”
- 10-pound boxes of “100% PURE GROUND CHUCK BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “158898,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “731014.”
- 10-, 15- and 25-pound boxes of “100% PURE GROUND BEEF

PREPARING GROUND BEEF FOR SAFE CONSUMPTION

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline
1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit
www.fsis.usda.gov

Although these products are not available at retail establishments, consumers preparing ground beef products should heed the following advice.

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.

CHUCK PATTIES” bearing a product number of “85227,” “227806,” “407823,” “407830,” “407840,” “417841” or “437531,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “730314,” “731013,” or “731014.”

- 10-pound boxes of “OUR HOMESTYLE 100% PURE GROUND BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “208033,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “731014.”
- 15-pound boxes of “SEASONED BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “357835,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “730314.”
- 15- and 15.3-pound boxes of “USDA CHOICE OR HIGHER 100% PURE GROUND BEEF PATTIES” bearing a product number of “437507” or “437521,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “730314,” “731013,” or “731014.”
- 15-pound boxes of “USDA CHOICE OR HIGHER GROUND BEEF CHUCK PATTIES” bearing a product number of “437822,” as well as an eight-digit lot number beginning with “731014.”

Each box bears the establishment number “Est. 8999” inside the USDA mark of inspection.

Consumers and media with questions about the recall should contact company Quality Assurance Manager Michelle Risius at (507) 529-4759.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. The very young, seniors and persons with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness.

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.

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NOTE: Access news releases and other information at FSIS’ Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/

USDA RECALL CLASSIFICATIONS

Class I This is a health hazard situation where there is a reasonable probability that the use of the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.

Class II This is a health hazard situation where there is a remote probability of adverse health consequences from the use of the product.

Class III This is a situation where the use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences.