



Rocky Ford Melons Recalled

September 14, 2011

At a Glance: Today, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) identified **Jensen Farms** of Colorado as the grower of the **Rocky Ford Melons** that are the source of the ongoing Listeria outbreak in 17 states. The suspect melons were harvested in August and September and distributed across the United States. Jensen Farms has issued a RECALL on their whole cantaloupes. The recall notice can be found at <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm271899.htm>. Rocky Ford melons from other growers are not implicated in the outbreak.

The Issue: Over the past few weeks CDC, FDA and public health officials in multiple states have been investigating a multi-state outbreak of listeriosis, a serious infection usually caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*. The investigators are using DNA analysis of *Listeria* isolated from patients to identify cases of illness that may be part of this outbreak. A total of 22 persons infected with the outbreak strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* have been reported from 17 states since August 15, 2011. All patients were hospitalized, and two deaths have been reported.

Am I Impacted? U.S. Foodservice is not affected by this impact. We have not purchased melons from Jensen Farms. If you have Rocky Ford Melons from another source, FDA recommends immediate disposal of the product

U.S. Foodservice Position: At U.S. Foodservice we take food safety very seriously. We also understand the extreme sensitivity of our customers to food-related health issues and are committed to keeping our customers abreast of the latest developments as fast as we get the information.

What You Can Do:

- CDC recommends that persons at high risk for listeriosis (older adults, persons with weakened immune systems and pregnant women) do not eat Rocky Ford cantaloupes.
- Listeriosis primarily affects older adults, persons with weakened immune systems, pregnant women and newborns. Persons who think they might have become ill from eating possibly contaminated cantaloupes should consult their health care professional.
- Cantaloupes marketed as coming from the Rocky Ford region should be disposed of in a closed plastic bag placed in a sealed trash can. This will prevent people or animals from eating them.
- Enforce good food safety practices in your operation which include:
 - All food handlers wash their hands before and after handling any whole melon, such as cantaloupe, watermelon, or honeydew.
 - Wash the melons and dry them with a clean cloth or paper towel before cutting.
 - Cut melon should be promptly consumed or refrigerated at or less than 40 degrees F (32-34°F is optimal for storage of cut melon).
 - Cut melons left at room temperature for more than 4 hours should be discarded.

Finally, count on U.S. Foodservice to keep you informed, and to keep recalled product out of your establishment.