

Food

FDA Investigates Outbreak of *Salmonella* Stanley Linked to Cashew Cheese from The Cultured Kitchen®

Update

January 31, 2014

Two samples collected by the California Department of Public Health tested positive for *Salmonella*. One, an opened consumer sample of smoked cheddar cashew "cheese," manufactured by The Cultured Kitchen®, tested positive for *Salmonella* Stanley, the outbreak strain. The other, fermenting cashews collected at The Cultured Kitchen®, tested positive for *Salmonella* Weltevreden, a strain which is not related to this outbreak. According to the CDC, the outbreak appears to be over.



Posted January 3, 2014

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local officials have been investigating illnesses associated with a specific brand of non-dairy, vegan cashew "cheese".

What is the Problem and What is Being Done About It?

The FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local officials are investigating a cluster of *Salmonella* Stanley illnesses associated with cashew "cheese" (a non-dairy, vegan "cheese" made from ground cashews and some additional ingredients manufactured by The Cultured Kitchen® in Sacramento, CA. During interviews with ill people, the California Department of Public Health determined that the most likely source of the illnesses is raw cashew "cheese" produced by The Cultured Kitchen®.

As of January 29, 2014, FDA has been notified of a cluster of 17 *Salmonella* Stanley illnesses including 15 in California, and one each in Nevada and Wyoming. No deaths have been reported. The CDC reports that nine (75%) of 12 ill persons interviewed reported eating raw cashew "cheese" in the week before becoming ill. Among those who had brand information available, eight (100%) of these eight ill persons reported that they had eaten The Cultured Kitchen® brand raw cashew "cheese" or had purchased it at a retailer that sold this brand.

The California Department of Public Health has **issued a warning**¹ not to eat The Cultured Kitchen®'s cashew cheese products. The Cultured Kitchen **initiated a voluntary recall**² of all

flavors of its cashew cheese products with expiration dates on or before April 19, 2014. The products were sold in natural food stores in Northern California and Northern Nevada and at farmers markets in Sacramento Valley and San Francisco Bay areas in California and Reno, Nevada.

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What are the Symptoms of *Salmonella* infection?

Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.

How Soon do Symptoms Appear After Exposure?

Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection.

What are the Complications of Salmonella Infections?

In some people, the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. In these patients, the *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream, and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics.

Who is at Risk?

Children are the most likely to get salmonellosis. The rate of diagnosed infections in children less than five years old is higher than the rate in all other persons. Young children, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems are the most likely to have severe infections. It is estimated that approximately 400 persons die each year with acute salmonellosis.

What Specific Products are being Recalled?

All varieties of cashew "cheese" products manufactured by The Cultured Kitchen® in Sacramento, CA with expiration dates on or before April 19, 2014.

UPC Code	Flavor	All Expiration Dates Up to and including 4/19/2014	Container Size
794504922714	Herb	4/19/14	8 oz round
736211709134	Smoked Cheddar	4/19/14	8 oz round
794504922615	Pepper Jack	4/19/14	8 oz round
794504922813	Habañero Cilantro Lime	4/19/14	8 oz round
794504851120	Pesto or Basil Pesto	4/19/14	8 oz round
794504924015	White Cheddar	4/19/14	8 oz round

What Do Consumers Need To Do?

Consumers should not consume the products with the expiration date ranges listed above. They should return it to the place of purchase or dispose of it immediately. Consumers should always practice safe food handling and preparation measures. Wash hands, utensils, and surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after handling food.

If more specific information becomes available FDA and CDC will share it with the public, along with any steps consumers can take to prevent illnesses.

Who Should be Contacted?

For more information please contact The Cultured Kitchen® at 916-212-0810.

Contact your healthcare provider if you have any of the symptoms described above.

The FDA encourages consumers with questions about food safety to call 1-888-SAFEFOOD Monday through Friday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Eastern time, or to consult the fda.gov website:

www.fda.gov³.

The information in this release reflects the FDA's best efforts to communicate what it has learned from the manufacturer and the state and local public health agencies involved in the investigation. The agency will update this page as more information becomes available.

For more information:

- [FoodSafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov) on *Salmonella*⁴

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