
FDA Alerts Sprout Growers and Retailers About Specific Lots of Alfalfa Seed Potentially Contaminated with Salmonella

Preliminary epidemiology regarding the ongoing outbreak of illness from *Salmonella* Saintpaul in people who had eaten alfalfa sprouts was shared with the supplier of the seeds associated with illness. Based on this information the seed supplier made the decision to voluntarily withdraw from the market all of the alfalfa seeds bearing six digit lot numbers that start with "032."

All seeds involved in this market withdrawal came from Italy. The seeds are in 50-pound white bags that are either paper or woven from a synthetic material, and the lot numbers in question begin with "032," followed by a hyphen and three more digits. The bags carry a computer-generated white or yellow label, on which is printed "Distributed by Caudill Seed Company., 1402 W. Main St., Louisville KY 40203" and the lot number.

FDA has no evidence that alfalfa seeds from other lots, or sprouts grown from them, are affected by this market withdrawal. Retailers, restaurateurs, and personnel at other food-service facilities should ask their suppliers to verify that the alfalfa sprouts or seeds being provided do not come from an affected lot before buying or serving them. Suppliers who can verify that their products were not sourced from the affected lots may wish to notify their customers; likewise, retailers, restaurateurs, and food-service facilities who have verified the sources of their alfalfa products may wish to notify their customers.

Seeds from the affected lots, lot numbers beginning with 032, and sprouts grown from them, should be safely discarded, as should other products that contain the sprouts, such as sprout blends. Growers who have used seeds from the potentially contaminated lots should clean all equipment and other surfaces that came into contact with them. They should also safely discard any water that came into contact with the sprouts, and disinfect receptacles or equipment that came into contact with the water.

FDA has long-standing guidance for the sprout industry and continues to urge growers to follow this guidance, which can reduce the risk of contamination with *Salmonella* and other bacteria (available on the FDA web site at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/sprougd1.html>). FDA also urges retailers to use sprouts obtained from growers who follow the FDA guidance.

FDA appreciates the cooperative effort of CDC and multiple state and local governments and acknowledges the cooperation of the seed distributor, the sprout industry and retailers in assisting the Agency in investigating and responding to the current *Salmonella* Saintpaul outbreak linked to alfalfa sprouts.
