



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants

Date: October 20, 2023

From: Public Health Services

Health Alert: Gastrointestinal Illnesses Due to *Salmonella* spp. Linked to Dairy Products Produced by Raw Farm, LLC

Key Messages

- As of October 20, 2023, nine cases of gastroenteritis caused by *Salmonella* spp., have been reported to the Epidemiology Program at the County of San Diego with illness onsets from September 21, 2023, through October 17, 2023. To date, three cases required hospitalization all of which were children.
- All nine cases reported consumption of unpasteurized milk or milk products produced by Raw Farms LLC of producer Fresno, CA.
- The County is advising residents to avoid consuming unpasteurized Raw Farm LLC milk and milk products until more specific product information is available or regulatory action has been taken.
- Providers can report cases of Salmonellosis with unpasteurized dairy exposure in the week before symptom onset to the Epidemiology Program using the contact details below.

Situation

As of October 20, 2023, [nine cases of *Salmonella* spp.](#) (6 confirmed; 3 probable) have been identified among San Diego County residents. All nine cases reported consuming unpasteurized or raw dairy products in the week before symptom onset. Specifically, cases had identified Raw Farm LLC brand milk or milk products. The median age is 12 years (range, 1 – 41 years). Symptoms included fever, bloody or watery diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, and headache. Three of the nine were hospitalized, all of which were children.

Background

Raw or “natural” milk has not gone through the pasteurization process. Without pasteurization *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *E. coli*, and other pathogens can persist and multiply. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) recommends against the consumption of unpasteurized dairy products. Persons with immune compromise, adults ages 65 years and older, and children 5 years of age and younger are at greater risk for severe outcomes from infection.

Actions Requested

1. **Advise** persons at increased risk for severe outcomes to avoid consumption of unpasteurized dairy products.
2. **Ask** patients presenting with gastrointestinal illness about consumption of unpasteurized dairy products in the week before symptom onset.
3. **Diagnose *Salmonellosis*** in patients presenting with gastrointestinal symptoms and recent unpasteurized dairy exposure by performing culture-based testing or obtaining a reflex culture if PCR positive for *Salmonella* spp. This allows for additional laboratory characterization (e.g., antibiotic sensitivity, whole genome sequencing).
4. **Report** salmonellosis cases to the Epidemiology Unit by faxing a [Confidential Morbidity Report](#) to 858-715-6458, or by calling 619-692-8499 (Monday-Friday 8 AM-5 PM), or 858-565-5255 (after hours).

Resources

- [Fast Facts About Raw Milk | CDC](#)
- [Raw Milk Misconceptions and the Danger of Raw Milk Consumption | FDA](#)
- [Salmonella | CDC](#)
- [Salmonellosis | CDPH](#)
- [Health Officials Investigating Outbreak Linked to Raw Milk | San Diego County News Center](#)

Thank you for your participation.

CAHAN San Diego

County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

Epidemiology and Immunization Services Branch

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