



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants

Date: March 22, 2023

From: Public Health Services

Health Advisory: Recall of Imported Frozen Organic Strawberries following Hepatitis A Investigation in Washington State

Key Messages

- Following an investigation of hepatitis A virus (HAV) infections in Washington State, which included the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Scenic Fruit Company, and California Splendor, Inc., specific brands and lots of frozen organic strawberries that were imported from Baja California, Mexico, have been voluntarily recalled. Some of these products were sold at locations in San Diego County (SDC).
- Consumers, restaurants, and retailers should check freezers and not sell, serve, or eat recalled frozen organic strawberries. These recalled products should be returned or thrown away.
- As of March 14, 2023, the year-to-date HAV case count is elevated for SDC, but no cases of acute HAV infection in SDC have been linked to these products.
- Report all suspect and confirmed HAV cases to the Epidemiology Unit by faxing a [Confidential Morbidity Report](#), but for cases among persons experiencing homelessness (PEH) calling 619-692-8499 (Monday-Friday 8 AM-5 PM), or 858-565-5255 (after hours) while the person is still in the healthcare facility is strongly preferred.

Situation

Five Washington State residents who developed [acute HAV infections from November 24, 2022 through December 27, 2022](#) reported frozen organic strawberry consumption as an exposure. FDA's traceback investigation led to a common supplier using strawberry producers in Baja California, Mexico. Although the recalls include food retail locations in SDC, as of March 14, 2023, none of the genomic patterns identified among SDC residents match the Washington outbreak strain. For more details on the recalls including brands and lot numbers, see the attached California Department of Public Health (CDPH) food recall notifications and the [FDA strawberry outbreak investigation](#).

Current San Diego County Hepatitis A Cases

The current increased cases of acute HAV infections in San Diego County are not associated with the Washington State outbreak. As of March 14, 2023, SDC is reporting 11 cases of HAV. Seven of these cases are persons experiencing homelessness (PEH); four of those also reported using illicit drugs. These cases have been spread by person-to-person contact and not spread by a food exposure, as seen in Washington State. For the most current information on HAV infections in SDC, visit the County dashboard of [Hepatitis A Local Cases](#). The epidemiology of hepatitis A in SDC is featured in the February [Communicable Disease Report](#).

Actions Requested

1. **Consider** postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) in asymptomatic patients reporting consumption of the recalled products in the preceding 14 days. Patients should be advised to dispose of recalled products.
2. **Provide** PEP for close contacts of confirmed HAV cases. Detailed information on PEP may be found on the CDPH [Hepatitis A Postexposure Prophylaxis Guidance Quicksheet](#) (updated April 2021).
3. **Diagnose** HAV infection by ordering HAV IgM serology in individuals with discrete onset of symptoms (e.g., nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, anorexia, fever, malaise, dark urine, light-colored stool, or abdominal pain), and jaundice or elevated liver function tests.
4. **Avoid** testing people who have no symptoms or elevated liver function tests, but report eating recalled strawberries. False positive HAV IgM test results are common when asymptomatic people are tested.
5. **Assess homelessness among suspected HAV cases even if they have no exposure to the recalled products and contact the Epidemiology Program while the cases are still at the healthcare facility** by promptly calling 619-692-8499 (Monday-Friday 8 AM-5 PM), or 858-565-5255 (after hours, during weekends, and on County-observed holidays). This will ensure public health staff can interview the patient by phone for a risk history and facilitate serum sample collection for HAV PCR and possible genotyping.
6. **Report** suspect and confirmed HAV cases to the Epidemiology Unit by faxing a [Confidential Morbidity Report](#) or by calling the above contact numbers.
7. **Vaccinate** all persons with [an indication for HAV vaccine](#): Especially PEH and those who use illegal drugs. Providers who do not have HAV vaccine available may direct patients to an immunization clinic at the nearest County Public Health Center.

Resources

- [Organic Strawberries Hepatitis A Outbreak | CDC](#)
- [California Food Recall Information - Scenic Fruit Company Organic Frozen Strawberries and Fruit Blend | CDPH](#)
- [California Food Recall Information Sheet - California Splendor, Inc. Kirkland Brand Frozen Strawberries | CDPH](#)
- [Health Advisory: Increase in Hepatitis A Virus Infections including Persons Experiencing Homelessness | CoSD](#)
- [HAV Vaccination Reminder for Healthcare Providers | CoSD](#)
- [Hepatitis A | CoSD](#)

Thank you for your participation.

CAHAN San Diego

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CALIFORNIA FOOD RECALL INFORMATION SHEET

California Splendor, Inc. Recalls Kirkland Brand Frozen Strawberries Due to Possible Health Risk

Recall Date	Product Description	Recalling Firm	Recall Reason
03/16/23	Kirkland brand bags of frozen organic whole strawberries	California Splendor, Inc. San Diego, CA	Outbreak of Hepatitis A illnesses

Recall Class	Product Identification	Distribution	Affected Dates
N/A	<u>Kirkland Signature Frozen Organic Strawberries</u> Size/Packaging: 4-lb. bags Lot Numbers (found on the back of the bag) 140962-08, 142222-23, 142792-54, 142862-57, 142912-59, 142162-20, 142202-21, 142782-53, 142852-56, 142902-58, 142212-22, 142232-24, 142842-55	Multiple states including California	N/A

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE [FDA WEBSITE](#)





CALIFORNIA FOOD RECALL INFORMATION SHEET

**Scenic Fruit Company Recalls Frozen Organic Strawberries and Fruit Blend
 Due to Possible Health Risk**

Recall Date	Product Description	Recalling Firm	Recall Reason
03/16/23	Frozen Organic Strawberries and Organic Tropical Fruit Blend Pineapple, Bananas, Strawberries & Mango	Scenic Fruit Company Gresham, OR	Outbreak of Hepatitis A illnesses

Recall Class	Product Identification	Distribution	Best By Dates Best If Use Dates Best Before Date
N/A	<u>Simply Nature Organic Strawberries</u> Size/Packaging: 24 oz. UPC: 4099100256222 <u>Trader Joe's Organic Tropical Fruit Blend Pineapple, Bananas, Strawberries & Mango</u> Size/Packaging: 16 oz. UPC: 00511919	Nationwide including California	Simply Nature Organic Strawberries: 6/14/2024 Trader Joe's Organic Tropical Fruit Blend: 04/25/24 05/12/24 05/23/24 05/30/24 06/07/24

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