Subject: INFOSAN Alert on recall of ice cream and other frozen products due to contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes* - reg.

An alert has been received from International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) with regard to the Recall of Ice cream and other frozen products due to contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes* in certain Food categories viz: Snacks, desserts, Ice cream, frozen yogurt sherbet and frozen products produced by *Blue Bell Creameries*.

2. Listeriosis is a rare but serious illness caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium called *Listeria monocytogenes*. Listeriosis can be fatal, especially in certain higher risk groups which include the elderly and people with weakened immune systems, and certain chronic medical conditions (such as cancer). In pregnant women, listeriosis can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature labor, and serious illness or death in newborn babies.

3. Beginning of **March 2015**, *Blue Bell Creameries* of Brenham, Texas, started voluntarily recalling certain ice cream products potentially contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. On **April 20, 2015**, the firm expanded its recall to include all of its products currently on the market made at all of its facilities including ice cream, frozen yoghurt, Sherbet & Frozen snacks, as they also have the potential to be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*.

4. Blue Bell announced this recall after sampling by the company revealed that Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Ice Cream half gallons produced on March 17, 2015 and March 27, 2015 contained the bacteria.

5. FDA has received information of international distribution of the recalled product and has notified government authorities of the following countries:

   *Belize, British Overseas Territories (Anguilla, Bermuda, Montserrat, Tortola, and Turks and Caicos), Chile, China, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Haiti, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, Oman, Panama, Peru,*
6. Though, the Blue Bell Creameries’ recalled ice cream products are not being sold in India, it might be possible that the sale of these products is available through online marketing. Therefore, the information is being brought to the notice of all stakeholders and the public in general.

(P. Karthikeyan)
Assistant Director (Regulations)

INFOSAN documents (enclosed for information)

To

1. All AOs, FSSAI.
2. Custom Authorities
3. All Food Safety Commissioner of State/UT’s
4. DGHS, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GOI
5. National Centre of Control Disease- National IHR Focal Point
Recall of ice cream and other frozen products due to contamination with Listeria monocytogenes

Date: April 24, 2015
Countries: Belize, China, Dominican Republic (the), Egypt, Haiti, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, Oman, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Yemen

WHO regions: Eastern Mediterranean Region, Western Pacific Region, Region of the Americas

Hazard: Bacteria > Listeria > monocytogenes

Alert details:

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local authorities are investigating a Listeria outbreak linked to ice cream and other frozen products produced by Blue Bell Creameries. Listeriosis is caused by the bacterium Listeria monocytogenes.

Listeriosis is a rare but serious illness caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium called Listeria monocytogenes. Listeria can cause a serious, life-threatening illness. People at higher risk for listeriosis include adults 65 years of age or older, people with weakened immune systems, and pregnant women. In pregnant women, listeriosis can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature labor, and serious illness or death in newborn babies.

Detailed Information from the USA:

Beginning in March of 2015, Blue Bell Creameries of Brenham, Texas, initiated voluntarily recalling certain ice cream products potentially contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes. On April 20, 2015, the firm expanded its recall to include all of its products currently on the market because they also have the potential to be contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes. This recall includes ice cream, frozen yogurt, sherbet and frozen snacks made at all Blue Bell facilities.

As of April 21, 2015, a total of ten people with listeriosis related to this outbreak have been confirmed in the U.S. Illness onset dates ranged from January 2015 to January 2016 and were identified through a retrospective review of the PulseNet database for DNA fingerprints that were similar to isolates collected from Blue Bell ice cream samples. All ten (100%) patients were hospitalized, and three deaths have been reported. Several strains of Listeria monocytogenes are involved in this outbreak.

International Distribution:

FDA has received information of international distribution of the recalled product and has notified government authorities of the following countries:

Belize, British Overseas Territories (Anguilla, Bermuda, Montserrat, Tortola, and Turks and Caicos), Chile, China, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Haiti, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, Oman, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

At this time, FDA is unaware of any other international distribution.

Recommendations for Consumers:

FDA and the CDC have recommended that consumers not eat any Blue Bell brand ice cream or frozen products and institutions and retail a venue not serve or serve them. Anyone who experiences fever and muscle aches, sometimes preceded by diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms, or develops fever and chills after eating
a Blue Bell ice cream or frozen product(s) should seek medical care and tell the health care provider about any history of eating that product(s). Symptoms can appear from a few days up to a few weeks after consumption of the contaminated food.

**PFGE Patterns and Whole Genome Sequences:**

Stains belonging to three serotypes 1/2a, 1/2b, and 3b are involved in the outbreak displaying 13 different PFGE pattern combinations (AscI and ApaI) of which five have been seen in patients and 12 in the product. One pattern (X6A16_2282, X6A12_0351, 1/2a) has been isolated from a patient epidemiologically linked to the product but not from the product.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PFGE Pattern (serotype)</th>
<th>Frequency in outbreak: non-human (human)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0335, X6A12_1640 (3b)</td>
<td>35 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0061, X6A12_0026 (1/2b)</td>
<td>19 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0335, X6A12_2256 (3b)</td>
<td>13 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0325, X6A12_0227 (1/2b)</td>
<td>11 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0020, X6A12_0227 (3b)</td>
<td>10 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0025, X6A12_0489 (1/2b)</td>
<td>5 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0061, X6A12_2581 (1/2b)</td>
<td>3 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0173, X6A12_0026 (1/2b)</td>
<td>3 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0025, X6A12_0077 (1/2b)</td>
<td>2 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0061, X6A12_1540 (3b)</td>
<td>2 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0282, X6A12_0365 (1/2a)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0061, X6A12_1512 (1/2b)</td>
<td>1 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X6A16_0027, X6A12_0511 (1/2b)</td>
<td>1 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The files with examples of the implicated PFGE pattern combinations (and a bundle file with the patterns associated with the outbreak) are attached and the locations of the relevant PFGE patterns are as follows:

- **K514117**
  - Ascl lane 2: ApaI lane 4
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0282, X6A12_0351

- **SC15015**
  - SC15818
  - Ascl lane 5: ApaI lane 5
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0025, X6A12_0489
  - Ascl lane 7: ApaI lane 7
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0051, X6A12_1517
  - Ascl lane 8: ApaI lane 8
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0051, X6A12_2026

- **SC15017**
  - SC15818
  - Ascl lane 13: ApaI lane 13
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0025, X6A12_0227
  - Ascl lane 7: ApaI lane 7
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0035, X6A12_0277
  - Ascl lane 5: ApaI lane 5
  - PFGE Pattern: X6A16_0035, X6A12_0277

- **FSE15010**
Raw whole genome sequences:

By whole genome sequencing the strains form four clusters. Representative raw sequences from each cluster are located in the Sequence Read Archive (SRA) at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra

SAMN0340210
SAMN0340211
SAMN0340208
SAMN03375458

From the INFOSAN Secretariat:

To date, the INFOSAN Secretariat is not aware of cases of illness linked to consumption of the implicated products in any other countries other than the ones mentioned above.

If cases of illness are found to be linked to the recalled products in your country, please liaise with your National IIR Recalls Point and also ensure this information is reported to the INFOSAN Secretariat so that we can accurately summarize the international aspects of this event.

Measures taken and outcomes of epidemiologic and food safety investigations in countries in receipt of recalled products should be posted on the related discussion forum on the INFOSAN Community Website (https://curex.net/who-infosan/infosan-discussion-boards?recall=1).

Please note that information about this event will also be shared with National IIR Recalls Points through their Event Information Site (EIS).

For additional information:

From the U.S. FDA: http://www.fda.gov/Food/RecallsOutbreaksEmergencies/Outbreaks/ucm381184.htm

From the U.S. CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/listeria/outbreaks/ice-cream-03-15/index.html


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PARTICIPATE IN THIS DISCUSSION (5 NEWS TOTAL)  PRINTER-FRIENDLY VERSION