

File No. 2-5/Codex (INFOSAN)/FSSAI-2015  
**Food Safety and Standard Authority of India**  
**(CODEX DIVISION)**  
(A statutory Authority under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India)  
**FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, New Delhi - 110002**

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Dated: 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2015

**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, still-birth, 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,**

**Philippines, Qatar, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.**

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



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## INFOSAN Alert

### Recall of ice cream and other frozen products due to contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*

**Date:** April 24, 2015

**Countries:** Belize  
Chile  
China  
Dominica  
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  
Anguilla (United Kingdom)  
Bermuda (United Kingdom)  
British Virgin Islands (United Kingdom)  
Montserrat (United Kingdom)  
Turks and Caicos (United Kingdom)

**Food category:** Snacks, desserts, and other foods

**Food involved:** Ice cream  
frozen yogurt  
sherbet and frozen snacks

**Illness reported:** Yes

**Number of ill people:** 10

**Reported to IHR:** Yes

**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 listeriosis 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 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, 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 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 2010 to January 2015 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 retailers should not sell 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:**

Strains belonging to three serotypes 1/2a, 1/2b and 3b are involved in the outbreak displaying 13 different PFGE pattern combinations (Ascl and ApaI) of which five have been seen in patients and 12 in the product. One pattern GX6A16.0282.GX6A12.0355 (1/2a) has been isolated from a patient epidemiologically linked to the product but not from the product.

PFGE Pattern (serotype)	Frequency in outbreak: non-human (human)
GX6A16.0336.GX6A12.1840 (3b)	35 (0)
GX6A16.0061.GX6A12.0026 (1/2b)	19 (1)
GX6A16.0336.GX6A12.2255 (3b)	13 (5)
GX6A16.0026.GX6A12.0227 (1/2b)	11 (2)
GX6A16.0020.GX6A12.0227 (3b)	10 (1)
GX6A16.0026.GX6A12.0489 (1/2b)	5 (0)
GX6A16.0061.GX6A12.2551 (1/2b)	3 (0)
GX6A16.0720.GX6A12.0026 (1/2b)	3 (0)
GX6A16.0026.GX6A12.0077 (1/2b)	2 (0)
GX6A16.0617.GX6A12.1840 (3b)	2 (0)
GX6A16.0282.GX6A12.0355 (1/2a)	0 (1)
GX6A16.0061.GX6A12.1512 (1/2b)	1 (0)
GX6A16.0207.GX6A12.0511 (1/2b)	1 (0)

Tiff-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:

KS14117	PFGE Pattern
Ascl. lane 2	ApaI. lane 4 GX6A16.0282/GX6A12.0355
<b>SC15015</b>	<b>SC15016</b>
Ascl. lane 5	ApaI. lane 5 GX6A16.0026/GX6A12.0489
Ascl. lane 2	ApaI. lane 2 GX6A16.0061/GX6A12.1512
Ascl. lane 3	ApaI. lane 3 GX6A16.0061/GX6A12.0026
Ascl. lane 8	ApaI. lane 8 GX6A16.0061/GX6A12.2551
<b>SC15017</b>	<b>SC15018</b>
Ascl. lane 13	ApaI. lane 13 GX6A16.0020/GX6A12.0227
Ascl. lane 7	ApaI. lane 7 GX6A16.0026/GX6A12.0077
Ascl. lane 5	ApaI. lane 5 GX6A16.0026/GX6A12.0227

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\* Chat (3)

