



Environmental  
Health

# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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## PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

<b>Food Safety</b>	Recall of Frozen Ground Beef from J & B Meats Corporation Inc.
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	Andrew Strader
<b>Date:</b>	October 15, 2007
<b>Release #:</b>	2007-Frozen Ground Beef 2

### INCIDENT

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service announced Oct. 13, 2007 – J & B Meats Corporation Inc., a Coal Valley, Ill., establishment, is voluntarily recalling approximately 173,554 pounds of frozen ground beef products because they may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7. The products subject to recall include:
- 2-pound boxes of "TOPPS PREMIUM 100% PURE SIRLOIN BEEF SIRLOIN STEAK BURGERS, 6 1/3 LB. HOMESTYLE BURGERS." Each box bears a use by date of "06/22/08."
- 8-pound boxes of "TOPPS 100% PURE GROUND BEEF HAMBURGERS, 32 QUARTER POUNDERS." Each box bears a use by date of "06/12/08," "06/18/08" or "06/22/08."
- 3-pound bags of "SAM'S CHOICE BACKYARD GOURMET BEEF BURGERS, 80/20, 12 QUARTER POUND ROUND PATTIES." Each bag bears a use by date of "03/08/08."
- 3-pound boxes of "TOPPS 100% PURE GROUND BEEF HAMBURGERS, 12 QUARTER POUNDERS." Each box bears a use by date of "06/18/08."
- Each package also bears the establishment number "Est. 5712 or Est. 9748."
- The frozen ground beef products were produced on June 12, June 18 and June 22, 2007, and were distributed to retail establishments nationwide.

### HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACTION

- Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Staff has contacted retail stores that may have the product to verify that the recalled product was pulled from shelves.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consumers who purchased these products should immediately discard them or return them to the point of purchase. Consumers and media with questions about the recall should call the company's recall line at (888) 734-0451.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

- **Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
- **Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
- **Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

## **INFORMATION**

- *E. coli* O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. The very young, seniors and persons with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness.
- The problem was discovered through an investigation into illness reported to the FSIS Consumer Complaint Monitoring System (CCMS). While the investigation is ongoing, J & B Meats is voluntarily recalling the products based on a preliminary analysis of epidemiological data. Anyone concerned about an illness should contact a physician.

### **PREPARING GROUND BEEF FOR SAFE CONSUMPTION**

**USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline**  
**1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit**  
[www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)

Although the product(s) being recalled should be returned to the point of purchase, consumers preparing other ground beef products should heed the following advice.

Consumers should only eat ground beef patties that have been cooked to a safe temperature of 160 °F. When a ground beef patty is cooked to 160 °F throughout, it can be safe and juicy, regardless of color.

The only way to be sure a ground beef patty is cooked to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria is to use an accurate food thermometer.

Color is not a reliable indicator that ground beef patties have been cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* O157:H7.

Eating a pink or red ground beef patty without first verifying that the safe temperature of 160 °F has been reached is a significant risk factor for foodborne illness.

Thermometer use to ensure proper cooking temperature is especially important for those who cook or serve ground beef patties to people most at risk for foodborne illness because *E. coli* O157:H7 can lead to serious illness or even death. Those most at risk include young children, seniors, and those with compromised immune systems.

### **Additional Information**

- Consumers with food safety questions can “Ask Karen,” the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at [AskKaren.gov](http://AskKaren.gov). The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.
- [www.santacruzhealth.org/alerts](http://www.santacruzhealth.org/alerts) for informational updates and other alerts