



This release was revised on June 8, 2008 to include Hawaii to the list of states **not** associated with this outbreak.

FDA News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 7, 2008

Media Inquiries:
Kimberly Rawlings, 301-827-6253
Consumer Inquiries:
888-INFO-FDA

FDA Warns Consumers Nationwide Not to Eat Certain Types of Raw Red Tomatoes

The Food and Drug Administration is expanding its warning to consumers nationwide that a salmonellosis outbreak has been linked to consumption of **certain** raw red plum, red Roma, and red round tomatoes, and products containing these raw, red tomatoes.

FDA recommends that consumers not eat raw red Roma, raw red plum, raw red round tomatoes, or products that contain these types of raw red tomatoes **unless** the tomatoes are from the sources listed below. If unsure of where tomatoes are grown or harvested, consumers are encouraged to contact the store where the tomato purchase was made. Consumers should continue to eat cherry tomatoes, grape tomatoes, and tomatoes sold with the vine still attached, or tomatoes grown at home.

On June 5, using traceback and other distribution pattern information, FDA published a list of states, territories, and countries where tomatoes are grown and harvested which **have not been associated with this outbreak**. This updated list includes: Arkansas, California, Georgia, Hawaii, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Belgium, Canada, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Israel, Netherlands, and Puerto Rico. The list is available at www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.html#retailers. This list will be updated as more information becomes available. FDA's recommendation does not apply to the following tomatoes from any source: cherry, grape, and tomatoes sold with the vine still attached.

FDA recommends that retailers, restaurateurs, and food service operators not offer for sale and service raw red Roma, raw red plum, and raw red round tomatoes unless they are from the sources listed above. Cherry tomatoes, grape tomatoes, and tomatoes sold with the vine still attached, may continue to be offered from any source.

Since mid April, there have been 145 reported cases of salmonellosis caused by *Salmonella* Saintpaul nationwide, including at least 23 hospitalizations. States reporting illnesses linked to the outbreak include: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. *Salmonella* Saintpaul is an uncommon type of *Salmonella*.

Salmonella can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections particularly in young children, frail or elderly people, and those with weakened immune systems. Healthy persons often experience fever, diarrhea (which may be bloody), nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain. In rare circumstances, the organism can get into the bloodstream and produce more severe illnesses. Consumers who have recently eaten raw tomatoes or foods containing raw tomatoes and are experiencing any of these symptoms should contact their health care provider. All *Salmonella* infections should be reported to state or local health authorities.

FDA recognizes that the source of the contaminated tomatoes may be limited to a single grower or packer or tomatoes from a specific geographic area. FDA also recognizes that there are many tomato crops across the country and in foreign countries that will be ready for harvest or will become ready in the coming months. In order to ensure that consumers can continue to enjoy tomatoes that are safe to eat, FDA is working diligently with the states, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Indian Health Service, and various food industry trade associations to quickly determine the source of the tomatoes associated with the outbreak.

FDA is taking these actions while the agency continues to investigate this outbreak with state and federal partners. Such actions are a key component of FDA's [Food Protection Plan](#), a scientific and risk-based approach to strengthen and protect the nation's food supply.

FDA will continue to issue updates as more specific information becomes available.

Information on safe handling of produce can be found at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodsafe.html>
Tomato consumer page can be found at www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.html
Updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can be found at www.cdc.gov/