

W I N T E R 2 0 1 0

# Safe at the Plate<sup>®</sup>

*Happy Holidays!*



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## E. COLI

CDC is collaborating with public health officials in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to investigate a multi-state outbreak of human infections due to E. coli O157:H7. This is a rare strain of E. coli O157:H7 that has never been seen before in the PulseNet database. PulseNet is the national sub-typing network made up of state and local public health laboratories and federal food regulatory laboratories that performs molecular surveillance of food-borne infections.

Thirty-seven persons infected with the outbreak strain of E. coli O157:H7 have been reported from five states. The number of ill persons identified in each state with this strain is as follows: AZ (19), CA (3), CO (10), NM (3) and NV (2). Dates of illness onset range from October 16, 2010 through October 27, 2010. Patients range in age from 1 to 85 years and the median age is 16 years. There have been 15 reported hospitalizations, 1 case of hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), and no deaths.



# Seafood

Officials across the country are finding high levels of imported seafood with dangerous and banned substances present. Imported seafood currently makes up 80 percent of seafood sold and eaten in the United States, and poses a major health risk.

As previously reported, the imported seafood industry is not only costing Americans jobs, but is costing Americans their lives. A Today Show report chronicles many of the same dangers of seafood raised in polluted waters in numerous Asian nations.

John Conelly, a representative for the imported seafood industry, in an attempt to defend the actions of these toxic seafood producers, “The vast majority of seafood coming in exhibits no problems.”

The FDA, which only has the resources to check less than 2 percent of imported seafood, has found between 8 and 16 percent of products from China and Taiwan to be tainted. Tests done in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and Oklahoma find almost half of imported seafood is contaminated. These results are in direct contradiction to the reassurances of the industry. While supermarkets now label seafood products by country of origin, restaurants do not. There is currently no way of telling whether the shrimp cocktail appetizer came from Louisiana or Vietnam. This is unacceptable, as consumers have a right to know, especially when their seafood may contain known carcinogens.

## FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, S.510

On Tuesday (11.30.10) the Senate passed the biggest expansion of food-safety laws in decades in a 73-25 vote. The bill gives the Food and Drug Administration more money and

expanded authority to inspect the U.S. food supply, order recalls and require better record keeping from producers. It also puts greater burden on food producers to prevent food contamination

in the first place. The House passed a similar bill last year and now the two bodies have to work out their differences. The White House supports the legislation.