

CLASS I RECALL
HEALTH RISK: HIGH

Congressional and Public Affairs
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ILLINOIS FIRM RECALLS GROUND BEEF PRODUCTS DUE TO POSSIBLE *E. COLI* O157:H7 CONTAMINATION

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2009 – International Meat Co., Inc., a Chicago, Ill., establishment is recalling approximately 6,152 pounds of ground beef products that may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced today.

The products subject to recall include:

- 5-pound, plastic lined boxes of “International Meat Co., PURVEYOR OF FINE MEATS TO HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS, BEEF PATTIES.” Each box bears the establishment number “EST. 22080” inside the USDA mark of inspection and identifying package codes of “061709,” “061809” or “061909.”
- 5- and 10-pound bags of bulk “International Meat Co., BEEF PATTIE MIX.” Each bag bears the establishment number “EST. 22080” inside the USDA mark of inspection and identifying package codes of “061709,” “061809” or “061909.”
- 10-pound bags of “International Meat Co., GROUND BEEF.” Each box bears the establishment number “EST. 22080” inside the USDA mark of inspection and identifying package codes of “061709,” “061809” or “061909.”
- 10-pound, plastic lined boxes of “Packed For, Purely Gourmet & Organic, Ground Beef Patties.” Each box bears the establishment number “EST. 22080” inside the USDA mark of inspection and identifying package codes of “061709,” “061809” or “061909.”
- 10-pound bags of “Packed For, Purely Gourmet & Organic, Ground Beef.” Each box bears the establishment number “EST. 22080” inside the USDA mark of inspection and identifying package codes of “061709,” “061809” or “061909.”

These ground beef products were produced on June 17, 2009, through June 19, 2009, and were shipped to distributors and restaurants in the Chicago, Ill., metropolitan area.

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PREPARING GROUND BEEF FOR SAFE CONSUMPTION

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline
1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit
www.fsis.usda.gov

Wash hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat and poultry. Wash cutting boards, dishes and utensils with hot, soapy water. Immediately clean spills.

Keep raw meat, fish and poultry away from other food that will not be cooked. Use separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry and egg products and cooked foods.

Consumers should only eat ground beef or ground beef patties that have been cooked to a safe internal temperature of 160° F.

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

The only way to be sure ground beef is cooked to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria is to use a thermometer to measure the internal temperature.

Refrigerate raw meat and poultry within two hours after purchase or one hour if temperatures exceed 90° F. Refrigerate cooked meat and poultry within two hours after cooking.

The problem was discovered through FSIS microbiological sampling. FSIS has received no reports of illnesses associated with consumption of these products. Individuals concerned about an illness should contact a physician.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea, dehydration, and in the most severe cases, kidney failure. The very young, seniors and persons with weak immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness.

Media and consumer questions regarding the recall should be directed to company Controller John Scorza at (773) 622-1400.

Consumers with food safety questions can “Ask Karen,” the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at 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.

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NOTE: Access news releases and other information at FSIS’ Web site at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/

USDA RECALL CLASSIFICATIONS

Class I This is a health hazard situation where there is a reasonable probability that the use of the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.

Class II This is a health hazard situation where there is a remote probability of adverse health consequences from the use of the product.

Class III This is a situation where the use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences.