

Action Alert

April 2, 2001

Alabama and Arkansas Firms Recall Chicken Products for Unknown Allergens Ohio Firm Recalls Soup for Metal Contamination

Keystone Foods of Gadsden, Alabama is voluntarily recalling approximately 3.7 million pounds of CHICKEN BREAST STRIPS which contain undeclared allergens (whey and egg yolks), and Simmons Foods of Van Buren, Arkansas is voluntarily recalling approximately 5.5 million pounds of CHICKEN BREAST STRIPS which contain undeclared allergens (whey and egg yolks). The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced the recalls March 30, 2001 in Washington, DC.

The recalled product is labeled "FULLY COOKED GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST STRIPS WITH RIB MEAT." The Keystone Foods product carries the case numbers 50054, 5005430K, 5005440G and ALL of these cases bear the plant number P-17341. The Simmons Foods product carries the case numbers 50054, 60054, 50055, 50118 and ALL of these cases bear the plant number P-20287. The product was distributed to restaurants and institutions in Kentucky, Virginia, Florida, New Jersey, North Carolina, New York, California, Texas, and nationwide.

FSIS administrator Thomas J. Billy reiterated that, "FSIS ensures that meat and poultry are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled." The problem was discovered by the establishment, who then notified FSIS.

Whey and egg yolks are known allergens and may cause an allergic reaction if persons who have an allergy or severe sensitivity to whey or egg yolks consume these products. It is, however, a Class II recall, posing a low risk of serious illness. FSIS is not aware of any illnesses associated with these products.

ConAgra Grocery Products Company of Archbold, Ohio is voluntarily recalling approximately 271,000 pounds of chicken noodle soup that may be contaminated with metal, FSIS announced in Washington on March 30, 2001.

The product, 18.75 ounce cans of "Marie Callendar's HEARTY CHICKEN N' HOMESTYLE NOODLES" soup, is in packages bearing "EST.P-91" in the USDA seal of inspection and a date code of "023L3P91." Produced on February 3, 2000, the product was distributed to retail stores in California, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada, and Colorado.

FSIS administrator Thomas J. Billy stated, "We urge consumers to check their cupboards" for this product, returning it to the point of purchase, and not eating it, if found. The problem was identified through consumer complaints to the company.

N.G.A. urges members who sell these products to post a consumer safety warning in their establishments advising consumers of the safety recall and urging them to return the product to them. N.G.A. also encourages retailers and consumers to contact N.G.A. with further questions on this and other food safety issues.

If you or your consumers have questions about the recalls you may contact Allison Appleby, Keystone Foods safety quality assurance manager, at (256) 492-4050; David Harris, Simmons Food's director of quality assurance, at (501) 524-8151, ext. 244; or Robin Dragich, with ConAgra Grocery Products Company, at 1-877-528-0745.

Consumers with food safety questions can phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555 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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