



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION

EHS Circular Letter #2010-21

To: Local Directors of Health
Chief Sanitarians
Certified Food Inspectors

From: Tracey Weeks, MS, RS; Food Protection Program

Date: March 31, 2010

Subject: **Oyster Recall Associated with Norovirus Outbreak**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture/Bureau of Aquaculture (CT DA/BA) has informed the department that FDA is working with health officials from Mississippi and Louisiana to notify the public, food service operators, and retailers nationwide about a norovirus outbreak associated with consumption of oysters harvested from an area designated as Area 7 in Louisiana. The oysters were shipped nationwide including to some dealers in Connecticut.

The CT DA/BA notified the Food Protection Program that all Connecticut dealers who received the recalled oysters were contacted and verified that the product was destroyed before reaching consumers. There is concern however, that some food service establishments may have purchased the recalled oysters from another state and may not be aware of the recall. Additionally, consumers may have purchased or consumed recalled product while in another state. Product may be fresh in shell or shucked, or frozen. As a result, consumers are advised to check with the point of purchase for to determine if the oysters are part of the recall. Food establishment operators who purchased product from another dealer in another state should check the shellfish tags to determine if it was harvested from the area implicated in the outbreak.

While complete cooking should reduce the risk posed by consuming food contaminated with norovirus the possibility that the subject oysters might be consumed raw or incompletely cooked raises a concern as does the potential for cross contamination from the oysters to other foods or food contact surfaces.

Please refer to the attached recall FDA and Louisiana notices for more detailed information. If you encounter any of the recalled product you are advised to embargo it and contact the CT DA/BA at (203) 874-0696 for information on proper disposition.

People who have eaten raw oysters and have symptoms of norovirus infection are advised to contact their health care professional and the local health department.

cc: Suzanne Blancaflor, MS, Chief, Environmental Health Section, DPH
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