



Outbreaks	Government	Farm to Fork
<p>California: Norovirus Officials in Amador County report an outbreak of nausea, vomiting and diarrhea due to norovirus affecting upwards of 100 people with about 20 cases occurring in a short period of time. A local hospital reported seeing a large number of patients in the emergency department with at least seven hospitalized.</p> <p>Tennessee: Hepatitis A Tennessee Health officials report a hepatitis A outbreak in Hawkins County linked to private wells. Tests conducted by the CDC found traces of hepatitis A in untreated water in two wells in that area. Officials believe sewage from ill persons' homes spread the virus to other nearby wells.</p> <p>Maryland: Pesticide Poisoning Six people at a family gathering in Gaithersburg became seriously ill after eating a stew flavored with mint leaves that may have contained pesticide. Authorities said those consuming potato stew became nauseous and dizzy, suffering hallucinations and convulsions.</p> <p>Nationwide: Prion Disease Outbreak Researchers report a new form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease - with patients gradually losing their ability to think, speak and move. Sixteen cases are known, and ten have died. No one yet knows how many people have the disease, where it originates, or how it spreads. Officials at the US National Prion Disease Pathology Surveillance Center believe it may be the tip of the iceberg.</p>	<p>FDA Blames Castleberry The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has blamed management for last summer's Castleberry's Food Co. botulism recall. A previously undisclosed FDA report from a congressional committee overseeing food safety cited poor maintenance for two cookers that were responsible for botulism toxin in chili sauce. It also said management did not correct known deficiencies at the plant. Last year, Castleberry recalled 90 products and shut down for two months. The cookers had broken alarms, leaky valves and an inaccurate temperature device, the federal agency reported.</p> <p>HHS Investigates Third-Party Certification Programs U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Mike Leavitt announced a groundbreaking program designed to enhance the safety of food. He made the announcement in a speech to hundreds of industry leaders at an Import Safety Summit in Washington. He described a new strategy to help ensure suppliers build quality into every step of a product's life cycle, targeting critical points where risk is greatest, and focusing attention and resources on these areas. The initiative is a third-party certification pilot program involving farm-raised shrimp. The project is designed to help FDA learn how to evaluate third-party certification programs and implement them in the field -- a key part of leveraging the additional resources of the private sector and other regulators.</p>	<p>USDA To Identify Supermarkets The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced it will name retail stores that received meat and poultry products involved in high-risk product recalls. The move covers only Class I recalls, those involving foods posing the most risk. "The identity of retail stores with recalled meat and poultry from their suppliers has always been a missing piece of information for the public during a recall," Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer said in a USDA news release. The FSIS will post on its Web site a list of retail stores (not food service) that receive products subject to Class I recalls, generally within 3 to 10 business days of issuing the recall release.</p> <p>North Carolina Holds the Clue Officials converged on a Charlotte-area restaurant suspected of being a source of multiple salmonella illnesses analyzing the facility's suppliers for any possible link to a national outbreak that has sickened more than 1,000 people. "This is one of the most recent outbreaks, and the samples are significantly important," said Joe Reardon, director of North Carolina's Food and Drug Protection Division. Officials declined to discuss the sources of food until they complete testing. Investigators have tracked some of the items to two suppliers who were able to provide extensive documentation about the origins and destinations of their products, helping investigators catalog details.</p>