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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 23, 2013

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### **Second outbreak of *Campylobacter* illness in 2013 associated with raw milk** *Bacteria strain linked to cow-share dairy farm on the Kenai Peninsula*

ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Section of Epidemiology is investigating another outbreak of *Campylobacter* infection associated with the consumption of raw milk. This new outbreak is associated with raw milk distributed by the same Kenai Peninsula cow-share program that was linked to a *Campylobacter* outbreak sickened at least 31 people in February 2013.

In the current investigation, five cases of *Campylobacter* infection have been identified to date. Two of the five people sought medical attention. Testing by the Alaska State Public Health Laboratory identified the bacteria strain as *Campylobacter jejuni*. The exact same strain of *C. jejuni* was found in cow manure obtained earlier this year at the cow-share farm that distributed the raw milk. "The genetic fingerprint of the bacteria isolated from these two people and the cow is unique. It has never been seen before in the United States," said Dr. Joe McLaughlin, State Epidemiologist. "These outbreaks are an unfortunate reminder of the inherent risks associated with raw milk consumption, and underscore the importance of pasteurization."

Anyone who has developed gastrointestinal symptoms such as loose stools and cramping within 10 days after consuming raw milk should notify his or her health care provider. Persons who develop concerning symptoms of illness such as bloody diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, arthritis, or muscle weakness should seek prompt medical attention.

Also, anyone who has consumed raw milk and subsequently experienced acute gastrointestinal illness in 2013 should notify the Section of Epidemiology Infectious Disease Program at 907-269-8000 (in Anchorage) or toll free at 1-800-478-0084.

#### **Resources:**

- [Raw Milk Fact Sheet from Alaska Section of Epidemiology](#)
- [February 2013 press release on Alaska outbreak of \*Campylobacter\* illnesses](#)
- [2013 Epidemiology Bulletin on raw milk](#)
- [Real Raw Milk Facts](#)
- [Home pasteurization information](#)

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