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## **Alaska Public Health Advisory**

AKPHAN

September 4, 2015

### **Salmonella Cases Linked to Recalled Cucumbers: Illnesses and Product in Alaska**

This advisory alerts Alaska health care providers and the public of confirmed cases of Salmonella infection linked to consumption of cucumbers that may still be available for sale in Alaska. Andrew & Williamson Fresh Produce of San Diego, CA, initiated a voluntary recall today of garden cucumbers, which can be identified in distribution channels as "Limited Edition" brand pole cucumbers. The labelling on the cardboard cucumber cases indicates the product was packed by Rancho Don Juanito in Mexico (see image below).

#### **Background**

The Alaska Division of Public Health has been working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention since August 21, 2015, when a multi-state cluster of Salmonella serotype Poona cases was reported with an unknown source, which included one Alaska case with illness onset on August 2. On August 28, the Alaska State Public Health Laboratory confirmed three additional cases of Salmonella associated with this cluster. Early investigation of the Alaska cases suggested an association with eating cucumbers, among other potential exposures. As of September 4, a total of 10 cases of Salmonella Poona have been confirmed in Alaska residents.

Mounting evidence obtained from Salmonella cases nationwide supports the role of recalled cucumbers from Mexico as the source of this outbreak.

#### **Guidance for health care providers**

Health care providers should be aware of the possibility of patients presenting with symptoms of Salmonella infection (e.g., diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps). Stool specimens should be obtained and sent to the Alaska State Public Health Laboratory (ASPHL) for processing. See ASPHL webpage for information on specimen collection and handling:

<http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Labs/Pages/publications/default.aspx>

Children under 5 years of age, adults over age 65 years, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe illness. Most people

recover in 4 to 7 days, although some people develop severe illness leading to dehydration or invasive disease. In rare cases, infection with Salmonella can lead to death.

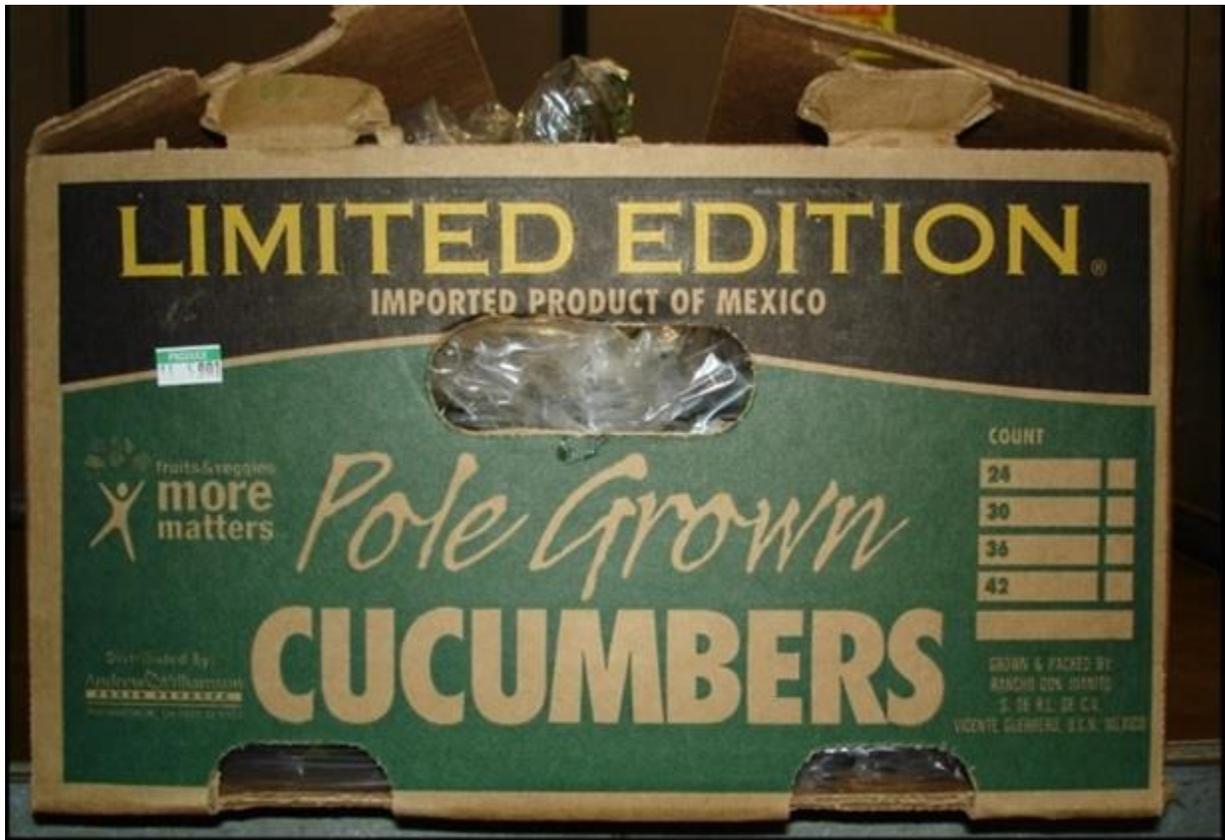
*Cases of Salmonella are reportable to the Alaska Section of Epidemiology: health care providers should call 907-269-8000 or 800-478-0084 afterhours to report suspected or confirmed cases.*

### **Guidance for the public**

If you are unsure if your cucumbers were recalled, throw them out. Your place of purchase or supplier should know the source of your cucumbers. Contact your health care provider if you think you may have become ill after eating cucumbers. Most people will develop signs and symptoms of illness 12-72 hours after exposure to Salmonella.

### **Salmonella fact sheet:**

[http://epi.alaska.gov/id/dod/foodwater/FactSheet\\_Salmonellosis.pdf](http://epi.alaska.gov/id/dod/foodwater/FactSheet_Salmonellosis.pdf)



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