



## **E.Coli Forces Beef Recall in 11 States**

### **At Least 14 Cases Linked to Tainted Meat**

**June 11, 2007 —**

The last thing Manuela Lyon expected after eating her husband's spaghetti and meatballs was a trip to the emergency room.

"My fear was that I was gonna die," she said.

Lyon is one of at least 14 cases of poisoning from E. coli, a potentially deadly bacteria linked to tainted beef from California-based United Food Group.

United Food Group originally recalled about half a million pounds of meat but then expanded the recall over the weekend to 5.7 million pounds. That meat was shipped to 11 states. Friday, Tyson Foods announced it was recalling 40,000 pounds of beef products shipped to Wal-Mart stores.

"It is small compared with the 24.7 billion pounds of beef that are produced each year in the U.S.," said David Goldman, Acting Administrator of Food Safety and Inspection Service for the USDA.

While that may be true, there have been six recalls involving beef products in just the last two months. And critics fear recent problems involving other products like spinach, peanut butter and, most recently, pet food, have diverted attention away from beef.

"The heat has been off the USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] for the last nine months while [the] FDA was dealing with these high profile episodes," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, food safety director of Centers for Science in the Public Interest.

The beef industry dismisses the spike in recalls as a fluke, and points out E. coli cases have dropped 80 percent in the last seven years.

"We need to look at the big picture," said Beau Reagan of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. "This is just really a snapshot."

But Lyon said the situation frustrated her.

"I hope nobody else has to go through this," she said.

Customers with questions about the recall can call United Food Group's hotline at 1-800-325-4164. Those with recalled products should throw the products away or return them to the point of purchase for a refund.

The meat was sold under five brand names: Moran's All Natural, Miller Meat Co., Stater Bros. Markets, Inter-American Products and Basha's. It has "sell by" dates of April 29, April 30 or May 6; "freeze by" dates of April 28, April 30 or May 7; or manufacture dates of April 13 or April 20. All will have a marking that says "EST. 1241" on the package.

The products were sold by California retailers including Albertsons, Sam's Club, Smart & Final, Stater Bros. and Superior Warehouse. The affected products were also sold in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and Montana, according to state and federal health officials.

You can protect your family from E. coli by cooking all ground beef to an internal temperature of at least 160 degrees. That will kill harmful bacteria and make the meat safe to eat. The California Department of Health Services is recommending consumers not cook these lots of recalled meat in an attempt to make the beef safe. The best way to be sure other ground beef is properly cooked is to use an accurate food thermometer.

For more information you can go to the following Web sites.

[Click here for the USDA's Web site.](#)

[Click here for the FDA's Web site.](#)

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