

# NEWS RELEASE



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**Headline:** ***Salmonella* outbreak prompts alfalfa sprouts recall:**

***Oregon Public Health officials warn consumers to not eat a certain brand of sprouts***

Oregon Public Health officials today are warning consumers about a nationwide recall of alfalfa sprouts produced by Caldwell Fresh Foods of Maywood, Calif., and sold under several label names in Oregon. The sprouts are being sold in at least 17 other states in the West, Midwest and the South. The sprouts have been identified as the source of an outbreak of salmonellosis. All Caldwell-produced alfalfa sprout products are covered in the recall.

To date, 23 people from 10 states, including one Multnomah County infant, have been identified with matching *Salmonella* Newport. At least four of these people, including the Oregon child, were hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

“Once again, alfalfa sprouts have been identified as the cause of an outbreak of salmonellosis,” said William E. Keene, PhD, MPH, a senior epidemiologist at Oregon Public Health. “Consumers who have sprouts at home should check to see if they have the recalled brands, and if so should discard them immediately. Retailers should immediately check their stocks and pull any Caldwell products.”

The recalled sprouts were packaged in four-ounce plastic cups and one-pound plastic bags under the Caldwell Fresh Foods brand; four-ounce plastic cups under the Nature’s Choice brand; five-ounce plastic clamshell containers under the California Fresh Exotics brand; and two-pound and five-pound plastic bags in cardboard boxes with a Caldwell Fresh Foods sticker. In Oregon, the recalled sprouts were sold at Trader Joe’s, Walmart and possibly other locations, including restaurants and delicatessens.

“Caldwell has agreed to voluntarily recall their alfalfa sprouts and is cooperating fully with our ongoing investigation,” Keene said.

(cont.)

State and federal agencies are working with Caldwell to remove potentially contaminated sprouts from distribution and to identify the source of the problem — usually contaminated seed. Retailers and wholesalers that have any of the recalled sprouts should segregate them from other produce and contact their distributor or Caldwell at 323-589-4008 for additional information. Restaurant and deli operators should check their stock immediately to identify and pull any of the recalled products, Keene said.

Salmonellosis is an acute bacterial infection that can cause diarrhea, fever and vomiting. Symptoms usually develop within one to five days after eating contaminated food. Most cases resolve without the need for medical attention, and antibiotics are not advised for people with uncomplicated illness. People who have eaten sprouts and developed severe symptoms should discuss this exposure with a health care provider. Some people with salmonellosis develop serious illness that can lead to hospitalization and even death, according to Keene.

Raw sprouts have been repeatedly identified as the cause of outbreaks of salmonellosis, *E. coli* O157:H7 infections, and other diseases. This is the 12th sprout-caused outbreak that has sickened Oregonians since 1995, Keene said. “Anyone concerned about a food-borne disease should consider this before eating sprouts. The risk of severe illness is particularly high among the elderly, the immunocompromised and the very young.”

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*[See photo example of recalled alfalfa spouts on Page 3.]*

