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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Recalled cantaloupes found in Clark County

(Las Vegas, Nev. – May 30, 2001) – The FDA recently issued a warning regarding Viva brand imported cantaloupes associated with an outbreak of salmonella poona. This brand of cantaloupe was distributed in Clark County and the Health District has surveyed local grocery stores and the product has been removed from distribution.

Anyone who may have bought a Viva brand imported cantaloupe should return the product to the place of purchase.

The Clark County Health District has recently identified five local cases of Salmonella poona. While some of the infected individuals reported eating cantaloupes a direct link has not been established. Symptoms include fever, diarrhea, nausea vomiting and abdominal pain. Salmonella poona can cause serious infections in children, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems.

For more information regarding this warning please see the attached information from the FDA.

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Print Media 202-205-4144
Broadcast Media 301-827-3434
Consumer Inquiries 1-888-SAFEFOOD

**FDA WARNS CONSUMERS ABOUT
VIVA BRAND IMPORTED CANTALOUPE**

The FDA is advising consumers of an outbreak of foodborne illness associated with cantaloupe from two Mexican companies, S.P.R. De R.I. Legumbrera San Luis and S.P.R. De R.I. Los Arroyos, and imported by Shipley Sales Service of Nogales, Arizona. This outbreak of Salmonella poona has involved numerous illnesses and two deaths in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Tennessee and Washington state.

Salmonella poona is an organism which can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Healthy persons infected with Salmonella poona often experience fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. In rare circumstances, infection can result in the organism getting into the bloodstream and producing more severe illnesses such as arterial infections (i.e., infected aneurysms), endocarditis and arthritis.

The cantaloupe was sold in retail stores and restaurants and possibly served in health care facilities. Fresh cantaloupe has a shelf life of 14-18 days.

As a result of this investigation, FDA has taken steps to prevent the importation of any other contaminated cantaloupe. FDA is detaining all cantaloupe

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imported by Shipley Sales Service from S.P.R. De R.I. Legumbrera San Luis and S.P.R. De R.I. Los Arroyos. FDA, States and other government agencies are continuing to investigate this matter. Retailers, restaurants and food service operations should determine if any of their existing stock of cantaloupe was purchased or sold under the Viva brand name, and if so, remove from sale. Any cantaloupe bearing this brand name should not be consumed. Although Viva is the only brand associated with this outbreak, FDA continues to recommend that consumers take the following steps with cantaloupe and other produce to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. This supports advice given by the state of California.

- Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged. If buying fresh cut produce, be sure it is refrigerated or surrounded by ice.
- After purchase, put produce that needs refrigeration away promptly. (Fresh whole produce such as bananas and potatoes do not need refrigeration.) Fresh produce should be refrigerated within two hours of peeling or cutting. Leftover cut produce should be discarded if left at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Wash hands often. Hands should be washed with hot soapy water before and after handling fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood, as well as after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets.
- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables with cool tap water immediately before eating. Don't use soap or detergents. Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas before eating.

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- Wash surfaces often. Cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops should be washed with hot soapy water and sanitized after coming in contact with fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Sanitize after use with a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in one quart of water.
- Wash surfaces often. Cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops should be washed with hot soapy water and sanitized after coming in contact with fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Sanitize after use with a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in one quart of water.
- Don't cross contaminate. Use clean cutting boards and utensils when handling fresh produce. If possible, use one clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood. During food preparation, wash cutting boards, utensils or dishes that have come into contact with fresh produce, raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Do not consume ice that has come in contact with fresh produce or other raw products.
- Use a cooler with ice or use ice gel packs when transporting or storing perishable food outdoors, including cut fresh fruits and vegetables.

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