

CLASS I RECALL
HEALTH RISK: HIGH

Congressional and Public Affairs
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PUERTO RICO FIRM RECALLS FROZEN BEEF PRODUCTS DUE TO POSSIBLE *E. COLI* O157:H7 CONTAMINATION

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10, 2008 – Packers Provision, a Puerto Nuevo, Puerto Rico, establishment, is recalling approximately 420 pounds of frozen beef trim that may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service announced today.

The products subject to recall include:

- 60-pound bulk boxes of “BM-95 BONELESS BEEF.” Each shipping container bears the establishment number “Nicaragua 4” inside the Nicaraguan mark of inspection. The shipping label bears the item number “00003,” and pack date of “8-19-08.”

The frozen beef trim products were produced on Aug. 19, 2008, and were exported to the United States and then sent to distributors and establishments in Puerto Rico. These products were sent to establishments for further processing and will likely not bear the establishment number “Nicaragua 4” on products available for direct consumer purchase.

The problem was discovered through FSIS microbiological sampling of imported product from a foreign establishment that was then sent to multiple importers of record in the United States. FSIS has received no reports of illnesses associated with consumption of this product.

Consumers and media with questions about the recall should contact company Logistics Manager Francisco Abreu or Vice President of Sales Jose Adorno at (787) 783-0011.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea, dehydration, and in the most severe cases, kidney failure. The very young, seniors and persons with weak immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness. Anyone with signs or symptoms of foodborne illness should consult a medical professional.

Consumers with food safety questions can “Ask Karen,” the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at AskKaren.gov. The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

PREPARING GROUND BEEF FOR SAFE CONSUMPTION

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline
1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit
www.fsis.usda.gov

Wash hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat and poultry. Wash cutting boards, dishes and utensils with hot, soapy water. Immediately clean spills.

Keep raw meat, fish and poultry away from other food that will not be cooked. Use separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry and egg products and cooked foods.

Consumers should only eat ground beef or ground beef patties that have been cooked to a safe internal temperature of 160° F.

Color is NOT a reliable indicator that ground beef or ground beef patties have been cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* O157:H7.

The only way to be sure ground beef is cooked to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria is to use a thermometer to measure the internal temperature.

Refrigerate raw meat and poultry within two hours after purchase or one hour if temperatures exceed 90° F. Refrigerate cooked meat and poultry within two hours after cooking.

NOTE: Access news releases and other information at FSIS' Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>.

USDA RECALL CLASSIFICATIONS

Class I This is a health hazard situation where there is a reasonable probability that the use of the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.

Class II This is a health hazard situation where there is a remote probability of adverse health consequences from the use of the product.

Class III This is a situation where the use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences.