

Questions & Answers re Hamilton February 24, 2009

1. Is there a recall affecting Maple Leaf meat products?

Maple Leaf has initiated a voluntary recall of a small quantity of *Shopsy's* Deli Fresh All Beef Frankfurters and *Maple Leaf* Hot Dogs Original as a highly precautionary measure since product that was being held under our aggressive food safety protocols was inadvertently shipped to some customers.

2. Why is the product being recalled?

When we have positive findings we have a 'hold and release' procedure we put in place to ensure that all products that leave our plants are safe. Our protocols require that any product that tests positive for listeria species does not leave our control and is destroyed. We have learned that these stringent protocols were not adhered to at the Hamilton plant as a result of human error. As a result, we have taken immediate steps to voluntarily recall the small quantity of product that was shipped to some customers as a highly precautionary measure to ensure that the affected product is quickly removed from the marketplace.

3. What products are affected?

The affected products are *Shopsy's* Deli Fresh All Beef Frankfurters (Product Code 20730 and UPC 6487520730) with a Best Before dates of AL22 and AL23 and *Maple Leaf* Hot Dogs Original (Product Code 22356 and UPC 6310022356) with a Best Before date of AL23. The products are sold in 450 gram packages, containing 12 weiners each, and were distributed to retail customers in Eastern Canada. No other products are affected by this alert.

4. Where was the product distributed?

The voluntary recall is being conducted in Eastern Canada, specifically Ontario, Quebec, Labrador and Newfoundland where the product was distributed. We are taking immediate steps to work with our customers to have any affected product removed from the marketplace.

5. What should I do if I have one of these products?

If consumers have the affected product, they should call 1-800-568-5801 to have that product replaced or return the product to the store it was purchased from for a full refund or product replacement.

6. Is there a health risk from consuming this product?

If you have any of the product included in this recall, you should not consume or serve the product. This recall is being conducted as a precautionary measure. There have been no confirmed incidents of any illness related to these products. Also, reheating hot dogs until they are steaming hot eliminates any potential risk from Listeria.

7. What types of products does the Hamilton plant produce?

The Hamilton facility is a packaged meat plant that produces predominantly ready-to-eat wieners and fresh sausage products.

8. Why are you still getting positive test results for listeria?

Listeria exists in all meat plants and in roughly 1-10% of all ready-to-eat foods, according to Health Canada. While it can be reduced, it can never be eliminated. We have implemented enhanced food safety protocols across our 24 packaged meat facilities to serve as an early warning system. These reflect best practices in North America and are designed to detect listeria species so it can be eradicated. Recent routine listeria species findings at the Hamilton plant are evidence that our new protocols are working.

Questions & Answers re Hamilton

February 24, 2009

9. Are the recent product tests from the Hamilton plant the same strain as at the Bartor Road plant?

No. Under our enhanced food safety protocols, testing detects for listeria species, which includes all six strains of the bacteria, even though only one strain (*Listeria monocytogenes*) presents any risk to human health. This is a very conservative approach and consistent with industry best practices. Product at the Bartor Road plant that was subject to a product recall in 2008 was contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*.

10. What level of product testing are you doing at your plants?

We have implemented a very aggressive testing protocol to serve as an early warning detection system across our 24 packaged meat plants. This level of testing is unprecedented in Canada and our rate of positive test results is consistently less than 1%, which is 50-80% better than industry data available from the U.S.

11. Who have you notified?

We are working closely with the CFIA. We are also in contact with our customers to ensure that affected product is removed from service and from their distribution facilities.

12. Has this ever happened before?

We are not aware of any past occurrence of this nature. We have placed extremely high importance on the implementation of our rigorous food safety protocols and we have taken all steps to ensure we have addressed this situation, including training of our people.