

Media Release

SA Health

Thursday, 19 May 2016

NEW SALMONELLA WARNING

SA Health has today ordered a local mung bean sprout producer Star Tu, to recall all of its products and stop selling immediately after Salmonella Saintpaul samples were found in packaged bean sprouts.

Chief Public Health Officer, Professor Paddy Phillips is advising South Australians to either throw out their bean sprouts or return them to the place of purchase.

A packager of Star Tu products, Sunshine Sprouts, has also been ordered by SA Health to stop selling on any products containing Star Tu mung bean sprouts.

Background

Since the start of December, 2015 there have been a total of 271 cases of confirmed Salmonella Saintpaul notified to SA Health of which 47 have ended in hospitalisation.

South Australia usually sees around 15-20 cases each year.

In March 2016 SA Health issued a public health warning to South Australians not to eat raw bean sprouts while investigations took place.

Through the course of intensive investigations, Salmonella Saintpaul was detected in a piece of equipment at the Star Tu factory.

This equipment was thoroughly cleaned and as there was no evidence of any health risk the public health advice was that consumption of raw bean sprouts could resume.

While there has been no increase in Salmonella Saintpaul notifications over recent weeks, the presence of Salmonella Saintpaul in samples taken from retailers has led SA Health to issue this order until further evidence is confirmed.

SA Health, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) and local councils are continuing to investigate.

Quotations from Professor Paddy Phillips, Chief Public Health Officer, SA Health

Over the course of the past few months we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of Salmonella Saintpaul notifications in the community.

Our initial investigations indicated to us that it was likely that the consumption of raw bean sprouts was contributing to this increase.

Our investigations then led us to the Star Tu factory and we found a positive Salmonella sample taken from a piece of equipment.

For more information

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Once this was cleaned and further inspections took place there was no evidence indicating any further risk.

Yesterday it was confirmed that since these investigations, five sealed bags produced by Star Tu were contaminated with Salmonella, and given this new evidence we have issued this factory with an order to recall and stop selling.

We are also today advising South Australians to either throw out their bean sprouts or return them to the place of purchase and we are recalling all products that have come from this factory.

If anyone has eaten bean sprouts recently and has any symptoms such as fever, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, headache, stomach cramps and nausea and vomiting they should see their GP.

Further Information

Further information about Salmonella is available at www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

Food businesses such as restaurants, retailers and cafes can find more information at www.sahealth.sa.gov.au under 'health alerts'.

Products recalled include:

- Star Tu, Chinese Bean Sprouts, all use by dates. Product sold in plastic bags all sizes, including 350g, 1kg and 5kg. Also sold to consumers loose.
- Sunshine Sprouts, Bean Sprouts, 125g plastic tub, all use by dates.

These products have been available at retailers such as major and small supermarkets, small grocers, as well as fruit and vegetable grocers. They have also been used by food service businesses, such as restaurants and cafes.

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