



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
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For Immediate Release

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Health Alert: Frozen Chicken Products Should Be Cooked Thoroughly

State health officials are reminding consumers to cook raw poultry to safe internal temperatures before eating. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Services has issued a public health alert due to illnesses from Salmonella associated with frozen, stuffed raw chicken products that may be contaminated with salmonella. There have been no confirmed illnesses related to these products in Wisconsin.

Products linked to the illnesses were produced by Serenade Foods, a Milford, Indiana establishment. Products include "Chicken Breast with Rib Meat Chicken Cordon Bleu" and "Chicken Breast with Rib Meat Buffalo Style" sold under the brand names "Milford Valley Farms," "Dutch Farms" and "Kirkwood." The individually wrapped, 6-ounce products were produced on January 21, 2008 (date code C8021 is printed on the side of the package).

Each of these packages bears the establishment number "Est. P-2375" inside the USDA mark of inspection. These specific products were distributed to retail establishments in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, North Dakota, Vermont and Wisconsin.

Salmonella is sometimes present in raw chicken, which is why it is important for consumers to follow safe food handling practices and package instructions. Consumers with these products in their freezers should be sure to cook them to 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

People infected with Salmonella bacteria may experience mild to severe diarrhea, abdominal pains, fever, and occasionally vomiting for several days. Bloodstream infections are infrequent, but can be quite serious, particularly in the very young or elderly. Most people with Salmonella infection will recover on their own, but it is important to drink fluids to prevent dehydration. If you have any questions about your symptoms, contact your health care provider.

Consumers can reduce their risk of Salmonella infection by:

- washing their hands with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat and poultry;
- washing cutting boards, dishes and utensils with hot soapy water;
- cleaning up spills right away;
- keeping raw meat, fish and other poultry away from other food that will not be cooked;
- using separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry and egg products and cooked foods;
- cooking raw meat and poultry to safe internal temperatures (165 degrees Fahrenheit for poultry, 160 degrees Fahrenheit for beef or pork) before eating;
- refrigerating raw meat and poultry within two hours after purchase (one hour if temperatures exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit) and
- refrigerating cooked meat and poultry within two hours after cooking.

For more information about Salmonella, visit: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/Salmonellosis.htm>

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