



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RECALLS FROZEN RAW IMPORTED OYSTERS ASSOCIATED WITH NOROVIRUS ILLNESS

HONOLULU - The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is issuing a recall notice for frozen, raw oysters imported from Korea and sold in bulk to distributors and food establishments in Hawaii. The individually quick frozen (IQF) raw oysters on the half shell are packaged under the Dai One Food Company label. The shellfish harvest dates are Feb. 10, 11, 12, and 13, 2015 and are listed on the required shellfish identification tags for all bulk shellfish cases.

“The department has already conducted product trace-backs and embargoed all of the suspect product on Nov. 24 at various local shellfish distributors and restaurants,” said Peter Oshiro, “Although this product is not sold directly to the public, a recall has been issued as an additional safeguard to further notify anyone who may possess the product that it is unsafe and should be destroyed.”

A product embargo prohibits businesses from using a product suspected of causing illness until a determination is made on the safety of the product. The department received reports of sporadic illnesses (11 total) in September, October, and November of this year that appeared to be linked to the consumption of raw oysters. Samples of the suspect oysters were sent to U.S. Food and Drug Administration Gulf Coast Seafood Laboratory in Alabama for testing, and the samples tested positive for Norovirus. With the positive lab results, DOH has ordered all of the embargoed product held by distributors and restaurants to be destroyed.

Norovirus symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, fever, and headaches with onset usually within 12-48 hrs after consuming contaminated food. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should consult a physician and if foodborne illness is suspected, report it to the DOH Disease Investigation Branch at (808) 586-4586.

Department of Health food rules effective February 2014 require a consumer advisory at the point of sale for any restaurant or eatery serving raw or undercooked foods. The advisory states, "Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness." Pregnant or immunocompromised individuals are also advised not to consume any raw or undercooked foods.

For more information on the department's new restaurant rules and food safety program go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/san/>

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