



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR BRUCE S.

J. ANDERSON, Ph.D.

DIRECTOR

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Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut products recalled due to possible *E. coli* contamination

HONOLULU -- Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut products produced at the company's facility located at 16-701 Macadamia Road in Kea'au, Hawai'i between Sept. 6-21 have been voluntarily recalled due to potential contamination of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*). The recall follows a detection of *E. coli* in the well water and distribution system that supplies the Kea'au facility. No illnesses related to the water have been reported to the state.

All retailers of Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut products are to remove from sale products received after Sept. 6, as these products may have been contaminated with *E. coli* and are adulterated. Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), Section §328-9 (1)(D) defines adulterated as a food "produced, prepared, or packed or held under insanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated..."

"There is clear evidence that food produced at the Kea'au facility may be contaminated and consumers may be at risk," said Peter Oshiro, Sanitation Branch chief. "The Department of Health is working with the facility to ensure the safety of their drinking water and food production."

On Sept. 5, samples taken from facility's water distribution system passed testing and showed no contamination. On Sept. 21, the DOH was notified that a water distribution system sample at the production center tested positive for *E. coli* and the food production operations were closed by order of DOH. DOH is working with the facility to ensure their drinking water is safe and their facility is cleared before operations are allowed to resume. The Mauna Loa macadamia nut facility will remain closed until it meets all DOH Sanitation Branch and Safe Drinking Water Branch requirements and standards.

E. coli bacteria can exist in tropical, sub-tropical and temperate soil and may persist in soil for many years. *E. coli* are bacteria whose presence indicates that water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special

health risk for infants, young children, the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems.

Consumers who have purchased the recalled products should discard the products immediately or attempt to return them to the store where purchased.

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