



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Public encouraged to participate in second health department food consumption survey**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD) will distribute a follow-up statewide survey by mail this week to collect a second round of information to better understand what behaviors might put individuals at risk for foodborne illnesses, including angiostrongyliasis, commonly known as rat lungworm disease.

Starting on July 3, a paper-based survey will be mailed to randomly selected households across the state and will include an option to submit responses online. This survey will not use phone or email to contact residents. Households that received surveys previously in November 2018 during the first round will not be included in the distribution of the second survey. Anthology Marketing Group will administer the survey, collect responses, and aggregate the data to maintain respondent confidentiality.

“Our behaviors, activities, eating habits, and living environments often change depending on what season we’re in, so it’s important for us to collect a second round of data to fill in more of the picture of potential disease risk factors across the state,” said State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park. “We encourage those who receive the survey in the mail to promptly complete and return it.”

The first statewide survey, distributed on Nov. 1, 2018, surpassed the collection goal set by the health department with 4,482 responses.

Not only will the second round of surveys help to validate findings from the first set distributed [last November](#), but it will also provide valuable insight into how eating habits and home environments change depending on what time of year it is. Seasonality can introduce different food consumption habits, and seasons change environmental situations around the home. Both of these variables are important to understanding disease risk factors and guiding prevention methods.

The survey includes questions about what food items residents typically consume, where food is purchased or grown, sources of water for drinking and cooking, how food is prepared, and exposure to rats, slugs, and snails in the area surrounding a survey respondent’s home. Data

gathered will be used to educate the public on best practices for food safety, guide public health intervention and prevention efforts, and enhance understanding of the foodborne disease risks among Hawai'i residents and visitors.

Those who receive a mailed survey are encouraged to complete it in full and return responses promptly in the included postage-paid envelope, or complete it online, following the instructions provided.

If recipients wish to confirm the authenticity of the survey received by mail, they may contact the Department of Health at (808) 586-8362 or Anthology Marketing Group at (844) 850-3605 and follow the instructions included in each survey packet. Participation in this survey is voluntary.

More information about rat lungworm disease and how to prevent it can be found online at the following websites:

- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/angiostrongylus/>
- DOH website: [http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease\\_listing/rat-lungworm-angiostrongyliasis/](http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/rat-lungworm-angiostrongyliasis/)

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