

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 16, 2023

23-058

Department of Health warns about raw oysters potentially contaminated with norovirus

HONOLULU, HI - The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Food Safety Branch is issuing an alert regarding raw oysters exported from Dai One Food Co., Ltd., Republic of Korea (ROK), which may be potentially contaminated with norovirus.

DOH notified the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of five illnesses from individuals who consumed raw oyster shooters at a restaurant in Hawai'i on May 10, 2023. Trace-back information revealed the source for the implicated raw oysters was from a shipment by Dai One Food Co., Ltd., ROK. Samples collected were sent to the FDA to be tested for the presence of norovirus. The FDA released its findings on June 12, 2023, confirming that norovirus GII was detected in one of the two samples collected.

Dai One Food Co. Ltd. has voluntarily recalled Individual Quick Freezing (IQF) raw oysters, harvested between February 2 and 4, 2022 and April 13 and 14, 2022, that were shipped from the ROK and distributed to restaurants and retailers in Hawai'i, Georgia and Minnesota. The lot numbers affected are: D021031, D021041, and D020481.

Norovirus can cause a sporadic gastroenteritis in populations ranging from children to the elderly. The infections are more frequent in children under age 5 than in adults. The most-common symptoms of norovirus are diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, and stomach pain. Other symptoms include fever, headache, and body ache. Most people infected with norovirus begin to develop symptoms 12 to 48 hours after infection. Symptoms usually last one to four days.

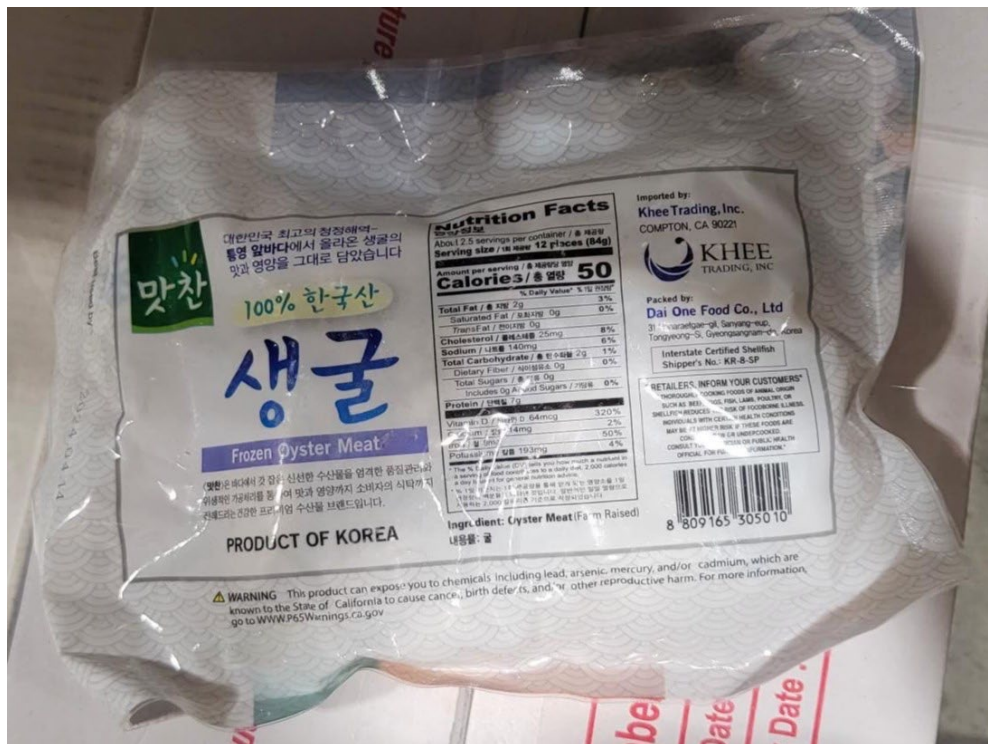
Consumers, especially those who are or could become pregnant, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems, who have recently consumed raw oysters and suspect they have food poisoning, should seek medical care immediately.

What do restaurants, retailers and consumers need to do?

Restaurants and retailers should not sell the potentially affected raw oysters. Restaurants, retailers and consumers should dispose of any products by throwing them in the garbage or returning to their retailer or distributor for destruction.

Restaurants, retailers and consumers should also be aware that the oysters may be a source of pathogens and should control the potential for cross-contamination of food processing equipment and the food processing environment. They should follow the steps below:

- Wash hands with warm water and soap following the cleaning and sanitation process.
- Retailers, restaurants, and other food service operators who have processed and packaged any potentially contaminated products need to be concerned about cross-contamination of cutting surfaces and utensils through contact with the potentially contaminated products.
- Retailers that have sold bulk product should clean and sanitize the containers used to hold the product.
- Regular frequent cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and utensils used in food preparation may help to minimize the likelihood of cross-contamination.





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