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Poland

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Polish eggs traced-back for across Europe outbreak of Salmonella.

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

On October, 20, 2016, Poland was notified by the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) about a contamination of eggs with Salmonella Enteritidis detected in Europe. The outbreak of Salmonella has been traced by multiple countries to eggs from Poland. As a result of the notification, the Polish exporter withdrew from the market millions of eggs across Europe, including Poland. According to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), from May 1 to October 12, 2016, seven countries had reported a total of 260 illnesses out of which 112 were confirmed and 148 probable human cases of Salmonella.

General Information:

On October 20, 2016 Polish National Contact Point for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) in the General Veterinary Inspectorate (GVI) received an emergency notification submitted by the Netherlands on the confirmation of international outbreaks of Salmonella Enteritidis (SE). The information contained in the notification clearly showed that the contamination was caused by the shipment of eggs from a poultry farm from Wielkopolska Province in Western Poland. On October 21, 2016, the European Commission held a teleconference on the recent cases of Salmonella poisoning related to eggs originating from Poland. The teleconference was attended by countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Croatia) which received contaminated shipments of eggs from the farm in Wielkopolska. During the teleconference the GVI explained the steps undertaken to remove the batches of eggs covered by the RASFF emergency notification.

In response to the notification the GVI took the following actions:

1. Published an administrative decision prohibiting the marketing of eggs from infected farms. The decision banned marketing of eggs but did not apply to eggs intended for processing with heat treatment;
2. Carried out microbiological testing for the presence of Salmonella in the production facilities and in samples of poultry manure from chicken houses;
3. Prepared distribution lists of the shipments from the farm to the Netherlands, Belgium and Croatia.

In addition, the CVO of Poland ordered a recall of the market eggs with three separate batch numbers due to possible contamination with Salmonella. The recalled eggs had following numbers stamped on their shells: 3PL30221321, 3PL30221304 and 3PL30221320. Poland provided the following list of countries to which eggs were distributed, directly or indirectly: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania and the United Kingdom. Polish officials did not include Hong Kong in the distribution details reported to the European Commission. However, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in Hong Kong, announced that two companies imported a total of 5,691 cartons of the affected eggs from Poland. The information from the CFS did not indicate if any Salmonella outbreaks occurred in Hong Kong.

According to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), from May 1 to October 12, 2016, seven countries reported a total of 260 illnesses out of which 112 were confirmed human cases of SE and 148 probable human cases of SE. Cases have been reported by Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK, while Croatia reported one case of death probably associated with the same outbreak. Although food safety authorities in Belgium and the Netherlands informed that the contaminated eggs had been distributed mainly to restaurants, Czech Republic authorities informed that 2.7 million eggs were being recalled from local stores owned by three large supermarket chains - Ahold, Kaufland and Tesco. This outbreak has been traced by multiple countries to eggs from Poland. Shell eggs and unpasteurized liquid eggs were affected. At least 10 farms and one packing center in Poland have been linked to the outbreak by trace back investigations.

Following the announcement of the CVO (dated October 27, 2016) regarding potential contamination of eggs with Salmonella, the Polish supermarket chain "Biedronka" (owned by Jeronimo Martins Poland)

withdrew eggs with lot numbers 3PL30221321 and 3PL30221304 from their stores, due to the risk of infection with Salmonella. Eggs from these batches were supplied from five out of 15 distribution centers for Biedronka stores in Poland (mainly to Southern Poland). In a press release issued by Biedronka chain it was stated that, after receiving on October 21, 2016 from a supplier of eggs, Poultry Farms Wozniak, notice that the District Veterinary Officer started Salmonella control on their farms, the Biedronka company decided to immediately withdraw all eggs indicated as potentially infected batches. As of October 28, 2016, eggs from the batches specified in the announcement of the CVO were no longer on sale in their stores.

On November 2, 2016 the CVO issued a new announcement adding to two previously recalled batches also a third batch of eggs with a number 3PL30221320 stamped on their shells. It is not confirmed yet whether Biedronka chain received eggs from the third batch, and if so, whether eggs from the third batch have been removed from their stores.

End of Report.