Salmonellosis Outbreak Associated with a Pop-up Pantry

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Ruby’s Pantry – “Pop Up” Food Pantry

- Donated food stored in warehouses located in MN and WI
- Food sent by truck to rotating drop sites (“mobile food pantry”)
- 70 locations in MN and WI
- Bulk food divided into smaller portions for distribution
- Volunteer staff at churches; community buildings
- Hundreds of patrons per pantry location
Ruby’s Pantry
May 11 at 6:20am

North Branch, MN Ruby’s Pop-Up Pantry 10:00 am
Saturday, May 12, 2018
Hosted by Access Church – 4520 St. Croix Trail, North Branch, MN
Here is a partial list, subject to change, of food items you will receive:
Assorted Meat
Yogurt
Milk
Hard-Boiled Eggs
Assorted Refrigerated Groceries
English Muffins
Bread
Ice Cream
Pizza Frozen Potatoes – 2 Kinds
Water
Salad Dressing
Coffee Creamer
Candy
Chips
Tea
Pop
Snacks
Paper Products
For more information, visit: https://www.rubyspantry.org/
There is a $20 donation per food share. There are no income or residency requirements.
Salmonellosis Associated with a Mobile Food Share

May 23, 2018

• MDH received a call from Wisconsin epidemiologists regarding the outbreak

• MDH added a Ruby’s Pantry question for all \textit{Salmonella} Enteritidis or \textit{Salmonella} pending serotype routine interviews

May 25, 2018

• First Minnesota case identified during routine interview
  – \textit{Salmonella} serotype and PFGE pending
  – Received a food share from pop-up pantry program
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May 30, 2018
• MDA inspector visit to MN warehouse location – facility voluntarily holds all raw, breaded chicken products

May 31, 2018
• MN and WI hold call with facility and request a withdrawal from distribution

June 1, 2018
• MN and WI issue a consumer notification
Anyone who received any unlabeled chicken products from any Ruby’s Pantry location is advised to either discard any remaining product or cook it to an internal temperature of 165°F. These products may be raw even if they appear cooked. A list of all Wisconsin and Minnesota cities with a Ruby’s Pantry location can be found at Ruby’s Pantry’s website.

Salmonella outbreaks are caused by Salmonella bacteria that are spread by eating or drinking contaminated food or water, or by short or direct contact with infected people or animals. Symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, and vomiting that lasts for several days. Bloodstream infections can occur but are rare and can be quite serious in very young or older people. Most people recover from salmonellosis on their own, but may require extra fluids to prevent dehydration.

If you have consumed food from a Ruby’s Pantry and are experiencing symptoms of salmonellosis, contact your health provider. If consumers in Wisconsin should also contact their local health department and 8 Minnesota consumers should contact the Minnesota Department of Health.

Raw chicken products can be contaminated with Salmonella or other pathogens. When handling raw chicken products, it is important to take steps to protect you and your family. The following tips are recommended for safe handling of raw poultry:

- Wash hands often, especially after handling raw poultry.
- Separate raw meats and poultry from other foods in the refrigerator.
- Refrigerate or freeze raw poultry promptly after purchasing.
- Cook all poultry to an internal temperature of 165°F.
- Always follow manufacturer’s instructions provided on product packaging.
- Place cooked poultry on a clean plate or platter before serving.
- Report suspected food poisoning to your local health department.

For additional information regarding safe handling of raw chicken products, see the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s Good Safety webpage:

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*Salmonella* Enteritidis JEGX01.004 Specimens Received at MDH, 2018

All 6 cases received food from Ruby’s Pantry
- 4 different pop-up sites (May 8 – May 15)
- All received a frozen breaded chicken product

![Graph showing specimen collection dates and outbreak details]
Breaded Chicken Product Received in Food Shares

- No labelling
- Raw or pre-cooked?

- Raw product
  - Patrons reported undercooking
- Positive for *S. Enteritidis*, closely related by WGS
My biggest question/problem is that some of the items in the beginning (frozen mostly) come without tags or instructions. So we are left to wondering what they are or what the ingredients are.

The worst thing that happened is when we got breaded chicken sticks or fingers that came in the last batch. I was under the assumption that these type of items are fully cooked, and since there were no instructions, I told my kids to just heat them up and eat them. I was not home at the time, but found out later that both ate the raw chicken. About 4 days later they both got very sick and my daughter had a lot of blood in her stools for about 48 hours.
Salmonella Enteritidis JEGX01.004 Specimens
Received at MDH, 2018

Additional case identified by WGS
- Onset July 23
- Denied Ruby’s Pantry exposure
- Purchased unlabeled frozen breaded chicken at retail
• No unique lot codes or internal traceability for the breaded, raw chicken products
  – “Chicken Fritter Chunks”
  – “Chicken Tenders”
  – “Chicken Fritter Tenders”
• MDA and DATCP requested SOP for repackaging, relabeling, and label content; training plan; and finished label samples be submitted for review
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June 14, 2018
• USDA FSIS notified MDA they would be visiting Ruby’s Pantry for an “educational/outreach” visit

July 17, 2018
• MDA returned to Ruby’s Pantry MN warehouse
• All raw, breaded chicken had been distributed
• Ceased re-packaging of raw meat items

September 13, 2018
• MDA held meeting between Ruby’s Pantry leadership and a representative from each impacted MDA program area
Highlights: MDA Meeting with Ruby’s Pantry

• Unique business model; complicated licensing issues

• Importance of labelling and cooking instructions
  – E.g. breaded chicken products may appear fully-cooked to customers

• Educating food pantry and shelves; volunteer “employees”

• Importance of following procedures

• Food safety vs. food security
Thank You!

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EXTRA SLIDES
Salmonella Enteritidis JEGX01.004 Specimens Received at MDH, 2018

Specimen Collection Date

Number of Cases

Non-outbreak
Pantry Outbreak
Other Outbreak(s)