



News for Immediate Release

Jan. 27, 2012

Health Department Advises Consumers about Raw Milk Produced in Franklin County

Harrisburg – The Pennsylvania Department of Health today advised consumers who purchased raw milk from The Family Cow store in Chambersburg, Franklin County, that several recent illnesses indicate the raw milk may contain harmful bacteria. Raw milk is milk that has not been pasteurized.

The department confirmed three cases of Campylobacter infection in persons in Pennsylvania and three confirmed cases in Maryland, all of whom consumed raw milk from this farm. While a formal recall has not yet been announced, the department recommends consumers discard any product purchased after Jan. 1.

The Department of Agriculture is awaiting test results from the raw milk samples. The farm has voluntarily suspended raw milk production.

Campylobacter is a bacterial infection that affects the intestinal tract and can sometimes affect the bloodstream and other organs. It is one of the most common causes of gastroenteritis, which can include diarrhea and vomiting. Nearly 1,300 confirmed cases of Campylobacter are reported each year in Pennsylvania.

The packaged raw milk is sold under The Family Cow label in plastic gallon, half gallon, quart and pint containers. It is labeled as "raw milk."

The Family Cow sells directly to consumers in an on-farm retail store and at drop off locations and retail stores around Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and the Lehigh Valley, as well as south-central Pennsylvania.

The shelf-life for raw milk is about 10 days, but can be longer if it is frozen or used to make other products. Freezing the raw milk will not necessarily kill the Campylobacter bacteria.

Onset of illness usually occurs in two to five days after ingesting the bacteria. Patients often do not require specific medical treatment unless they become severely dehydrated or the infection spreads from the intestines.

For more information about Campylobacter, visit the Department of Health at www.health.state.pa.us or call 1-877-PA-HEALTH.

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