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September 19, 2006

MEMORANDUM
SFSP-2006-12

TO: Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sponsors

FROM: Tammy Kratz, Administrative Assistant III
Child and Adult Care Food Program

SUBJECT: **FDA Warning on Serious Foodborne *E. coli* O157:H7 Outbreak with
*One Death and Multiple Hospitalizations in Several States***

**FDA Statement on Foodborne *E. coli* O157:H7 Outbreak in Spinach
Update: Monday, September 18, 2006**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued an alert to consumers about an outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 in multiple states that may be associated with the consumption of produce. To date, preliminary epidemiological evidence suggests that bagged fresh spinach may be a possible cause of this outbreak.

Based on the current information, FDA advises that consumers not eat bagged fresh spinach at this time. Individuals who believe they may have experienced symptoms of illness after consuming bagged spinach are urged to contact their health care provider.

“Given the severity of this illness and the seriousness of the outbreak, FDA believes that a warning to consumers is needed. We are working closely with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local agencies to determine the cause and scope of the problem,” said Dr. Robert Brackett, Director of FDA’s Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN).

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E. coli O157:H7 causes diarrhea, often with bloody stools. Although most healthy adults can recover completely within a week, some people can develop a form of kidney failure called Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). HUS is most likely to occur in young children and the elderly. The condition can lead to serious kidney damage and even death. To date, 50 cases of illness have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including 8 cases of HUS and one death.

At this time, the investigation is ongoing and states that have reported illnesses to date include: Connecticut, Idaho, Indiana, Michigan, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wisconsin.

Two Recalls – SPRING MIX NOW IMPLICATED

On September 17, 2006, River Ranch, of Salinas, California, announced a recall of packages of **Spring Mix** containing spinach. River Ranch obtained bulk spring mix containing spinach from Natural Selections. The following brands are involved: **Fresh N' Easy Spring Mix** and **Hy-Vee Spring Mix** containing baby spinach, distributed to retailers in Texas, Iowa and New Mexico. Product was packed in 5 oz. bags and 5 oz. plastic trays. **Products that do not contain spinach are not part of this recall.**

On September 15, 2006, **Natural Selections Foods, LLC**, of San Juan Bautista, California, announced a recall of all of its **products containing spinach** in all brands they pack with "**Best if Used by Dates**" of **August 17, 2006 through October 1, 2006**. These products include spinach and any salad with spinach in a blend, both retail and food service products. Products that do not contain spinach are not part of this recall.

Basket, Pro-Mark, Natural Selections Foods, LLC brands include: Natural Selections Foods, Pride of San Juan, Earthbound Farm, Bellissima, Dole, Rave Spinach, Emeril, Sysco, O Organic, Fresh Point, River Ranch, Superior, Nature's Compliments, Trader Joe's, Ready Pac, Jansal Valley, Cheney Brothers, Coastline, D'Arrigo Brothers, Green Harvest, Mann, Mills Family Farm, Premium Fresh, Snoboy, The Farmer's Market, Tanimura & Antle, President's Choice, Cross Valley, and Riverside Farms.

To date, 114 cases of illness due to *E. coli* infection have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including 18 cases of Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS), 60 hospitalizations, and one death. Illnesses continue to be reported to CDC. This is considered to be an ongoing investigation.

States Affected

There are now 21 confirmed states: California, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

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Consumer Advice

FDA advises consumers not to eat fresh spinach or fresh spinach-containing products until further notice.

If individuals believe they may have experienced symptoms of illness after consuming fresh spinach or fresh spinach-containing products, FDA recommends that they seek medical advice.

FDA will keep consumers informed of the investigation as more information becomes available

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