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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Potential Hepatitis A Contamination: Nationwide Frozen Strawberry Recall

Sutter Creek, CA – Amador County Environmental Health and Public Health Departments are conducting a joint investigation in response to a voluntary recall of frozen Egyptian strawberries due to the possibility of hepatitis A virus (HAV) contamination. The berries were distributed under brands: Sysco, CH Belt/World's Finest and James Farms. These strawberries were not sold in grocery stores.

All potential locations in Amador County cooperated fully with the investigation to ensure the health of our community. The investigation revealed that public establishments fell into one of three categories: (1) did NOT receive the recalled product, (2) received and used the product well outside of incubation period for illness: 15 to 50 days after exposure or (3) only served the product in food cooked long enough to kill any potential HAV.

The following were impacted locally and followed all recall guidelines:

- Amador County Unified School District: Did NOT receive recalled product.
- Drytown Cellars: Did NOT receive recalled product.
- Kit Carson Lodge: Served over 3 months ago. Not within incubation period for illness.
- National Hotel: Served over 3 months ago. Not within incubation period for illness.
- Jackson Rancheria Casino & Resort: Served only in cooked food.

Any remaining product was destroyed after the recall.

"There have been no cases of Hepatitis A in Amador County due to consumption of the recalled strawberries," states Dr. Rita Kerr, Amador County Health Officer. "We appreciate the thorough cooperation of our community."

In addition to the public establishments, four assisted living sites may have received the product. Both the owner and management of these sites have been proactive in their cooperation with the investigation. One instance of recalled product served in the last two weeks has been documented. As a precautionary measure, everyone who ate the strawberries has been offered post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Those previously vaccinated or tested positive for HAV prior to this event are immune and do not need PEP.

Hepatitis A is a contagious disease that results from exposure to the Hepatitis A virus which inflames the liver. A common source is contaminated food or contact with an infected person via fecal-oral. It can range from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious illness lasting several months. Illness generally occurs within 15 to 50 days of exposure and includes fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, yellowing of the skin, joint pain, dark urine and pale stool. Those with symptoms of Hepatitis A should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

Amador County Public Health will continue to monitor this voluntary recall and keep our community updated on any new information. For questions about your vaccination status, please contact your healthcare provider.

To learn more about Hepatitis A, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/HEALTHINFO/DISCOND/Pages/HepatitisA.aspx>

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