

Recall notice: Metz Fresh Announces Voluntary Recall of Spinach

Contact:
Metz Fresh
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- Salinas, CA -- August 28, 2007

Metz Fresh, LLC is voluntarily recalling bagged spinach as a result of a positive test for Salmonella found during routine company testing.

The spinach is distributed under the label Metz Fresh, in both retail and food service packages. These include 10 and 16 oz bags as well as 4-2.5 lb. and 4 lb. cartons. The only Metz Fresh product affected is spinach that bears the tracking codes 12208114, 12208214 and 12208314. It was distributed in the continental United States and Canada.

There have been no reports of illness or problems related to this spinach.

Salmonella is a common food borne pathogen that can cause severe illnesses, including fever, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. While most individuals recover in three to five days without medical intervention, the infection can be life-threatening to young children, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems. Consumers with any of these symptoms should call their physician.

Consumers are advised to discard this product or return it to the place of purchase for a refund. Consumers with questions about the recall should contact 831-386-1018.

"Nothing is more important to Metz Fresh than the safety of our consumers, period," said Andrew Cumming, President of Metz Fresh. "As soon as we learned of the presumptive positive test, we directed all customers to hold all boxes of the spinach affected as a precaution. Now, with this positive test confirmation, there is no question that we would recall and destroy all spinach bearing these three codes."

The positive test came during independent lab testing Metz Fresh conducts on all of its products. Through its labeling and numbering system, Metz Fresh has already tracked, located and put 'holds' on the vast majority of the cartons of spinach affected. That spinach will not be released into the marketplace.

While the positive test came from only one sample of many on three packing lines, Metz Fresh has, as a precaution, chosen to recall all of the spinach from the 'field lot' packed that day on all three lines.

Metz Fresh is keeping appropriate authorities updated on the status of the voluntary recall. There have been no reports of illness.

Industry spokespeople cite new testing programs that detected the Salmonella as evidence of increased safeguards for consumers. While some consumer groups such as Consumers Union and Center for the Science in the Public Interest claim that the industry needs to be more tightly regulated.

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