



Public Health Brief

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California Acts to Protect Public Health: CDPH Warns Against Drinking Single Lot of Raw Milk Following Bird Flu Detection; Secures Voluntary Recall

No illnesses have been reported; Pasteurized milk is safe to drink

What You Need to Know: CDPH warns consumers not to drink one batch of cream top, whole raw milk from Raw Farm, LLC of Fresno County due to a detection of bird flu virus. Raw Farm, LLC issued a voluntary recall at the state's request of the affected lot code 20241109 with a Best By date of 11/27/2024. Consumers should immediately return any remaining product to the store where it was purchased. Pasteurized milk remains safe to drink.

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) today is warning the public to avoid consuming one batch of cream top, whole raw milk produced and packaged by Raw Farm, LLC of Fresno County due to a detection of bird flu virus in a retail sample. At the state's request, the company has issued a voluntary recall of the affected raw milk with lot code 20241109 and Best By date of 11/27/2024 printed on the packaging.

No illnesses associated with this lot of raw milk have been reported. Out of an abundance of caution, and due to the ongoing spread of bird flu in dairy cows, poultry, and sporadic human cases, consumers should not consume any of the affected raw milk. Customers should immediately return any remaining product to the retail point of purchase. CDPH is also notifying retailers to remove the affected raw milk from their shelves.

The County of Santa Clara Public Health Laboratory has been testing raw milk products from retail stores as a second line of consumer protection. The county identified bird flu in one sample of raw milk purchased at a retail outlet. The testing was then verified by the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System.



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District 1: Charles Dobson, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Irvin Jim,

District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith

Risks Associated with Raw Milk

Public health experts have long warned consumers against consuming raw milk or raw milk products due to elevated risks of foodborne illness. Outbreaks due to Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, toxin producing E. coli, Brucella, Campylobacter, and many other bacteria have all been reported related to consuming raw dairy products. Raw milk products are not pasteurized, a heating process that kills bacteria and viruses such as bird flu.

Pasteurized milk and milk products are safe to consume because the heating process kills pathogens, including bird flu, that can cause illness.

Drinking or accidentally inhaling raw milk containing bird flu virus may lead to illness. In addition, touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands after touching raw milk with bird flu virus may also lead to infection. Symptoms of bird flu infection in humans include eye redness or discharge, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, diarrhea, vomiting, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue, trouble breathing and fever. Anyone who has consumed these specific products, and is experiencing these symptoms, should immediately contact their health care provider or local health department.

California Regularly Tests Raw Milk

As part of the state's bird flu response, testing of raw milk from dairies has been increased to help prevent raw milk consumers from getting the virus. Once bird flu was found in California dairy herds, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) began weekly testing of raw milk in bulk tanks. In response to this positive test from a retail milk product, CDFA followed up with testing at both of Raw Farm LLC's locations—results were negative for the virus—and now will begin testing for bird flu twice per week.

Pasteurized Milk is Safe to Drink

Pasteurized milk is safe to drink. Pasteurization, one of the most significant scientific food safety discoveries in human history, is the process of heating milk to specific temperatures for a certain length of time to kill many microorganisms and enzymes that lead to spoilage and illness. Pasteurization kills the bird flu virus and other harmful germs that can be found in raw milk. CDPH advises consumers not to drink raw milk or eat raw milk products due to the risk of foodborne illnesses.

About Bird Flu

Since early October, California has reported 29 confirmed human cases of bird flu, 28 of whom had direct contact with infected dairy cows. No person-to-person spread of bird flu has been detected in California or the U.S. To date, all cases have reported mild symptoms (primarily eye infections), and none have been hospitalized. Because bird flu viruses can change and gain the ability to spread more easily between people, public health officials have provided preventive measures and are monitoring animal and human infections carefully.

Protecting Public Health

California continues to take swift and comprehensive action in response to the detection of bird flu in dairy cows across the Central Valley, demonstrating a strong commitment to public health and worker safety. While the overall risk to the public remains low, the state is prioritizing containment efforts, raising public awareness, and providing resources to those at higher risk. Key initiatives include the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE), increased testing, and robust surveillance of infected areas.



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Through coordinated efforts between agencies like CalOES, CDPH and the California Department of Food and Agriculture, California is leading a cross-agency response that includes multilingual outreach to dairy and poultry workers, a targeted social media campaign to promote preventive practices, and media interviews to keep the public informed. Additionally, the state is ensuring that farm workers have access to additional doses of seasonal flu vaccine from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce concurrent flu risks.

Specifically, the state is:

- Working with local, state, and federal partners to monitor bird flu in farm animals and people who work closely with poultry and dairy cows.
- Distributing protective gear to dairy farms and workers who have contact with infected dairy cows or raw milk to reduce the risk of getting bird flu.
- Helping ensure individuals with symptoms of or exposure to bird flu have access to testing and treatment.
- Conducting timely [public education efforts](#) to ensure those impacted have information about bird flu.

How Bird Flu Spreads

- Touching the eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands after contact with raw milk from an infected cow, or other contaminated items or surfaces.
- Raw milk from an infected cow splashed into eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Drinking raw milk from a cow infected with bird flu virus.

More Resources

- For the latest information on the state's bird flu response, visit [CDPH's Bird Flu webpage](#) and [CDFA's H5N1 Bird Flu Virus in Livestock](#) site.
- For information on the national bird flu response, see [CDC's Bird Flu Response Update](#).
- For work-related questions or complaints related to bird flu, contact the Cal/OSHA Call Center in English or Spanish at 1-833-579-0927. Employers can contact the California Occupational Health and Safety Division at 800-963-9424 for a free consultation to strengthen their illness and injury safety program.
- Farmers should contact the California Department of Food and Agriculture's bird flu hotline at 866-922-2473 if they suspect their animals are infected with bird flu.



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