



KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSUMERS WARNED TO DISCARD BOLTHOUSE CARROT JUICE

October 2, 2006

Contact: Tom Schlueter (630) 444-3098

The health department is warning consumers about botulism being linked to a certain brand of carrot juice. The warning comes after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reported a fourth case of botulism linked to Bolthouse Farms Carrot Juice. Consumers should not drink Bolthouse Farms Carrot Juice, 450 ml and 1 liter plastic bottles, with "BEST IF USED BY" dates of Nov. 11, 2006 or earlier. Consumers should discard this product.

The fourth case of botulism poisoning involves a woman in Florida who is currently suffering from paralysis. To date, one link between the illness and the consumers appears to be that juice they drank was not properly refrigerated once it was in the home, which allowed *Clostridium botulinum* spores to grow and produce toxin. FDA is investigating other possible links. Three residents of Georgia consumed commercially produced carrot juice from the same bottle. All sought medical care on September 8, 2006. Clinical specimens from all three case-patients yielded *botulinum* toxin type A. High levels of *botulinum* toxin type A were identified in remnant carrot juice in the bottle from which they drank.

Although there are no reports of anyone in Illinois becoming ill with botulism after drinking Bolthouse Farms brand carrot juice or any other brand carrot juice, the health department notified its food permit holders of the health alert. The health department is warning that until the FDA can conclusively identify the cause of this outbreak, consumers are advised not to drink Bolthouse Farms Carrot Juice 450 ml and 1 liter plastic bottles, with "BEST IF USED BY" dates of Nov. 11, 2006 or earlier. Restaurants and grocers are advised not to serve or sell the implicated carrot juice. Anyone who thinks they may have experienced symptoms of illness after drinking carrot juice is urged to contact their health care provider.

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Adequate refrigeration is one of the keys to food safety and is essential to preventing pathogen growth. Refrigerator temperatures should be no higher than 40°F and freezer temperatures no higher than 0°F. Consumers should check the temperatures occasionally with an appliance thermometer. Consumers should look for the words "Keep Refrigerated" on juice labels so they know which products must be kept refrigerated. FDA is looking into whether industry's current juice labels provide clear refrigeration instructions.

Clostridium botulinum is a bacterium commonly found in soil. Under certain conditions these bacteria can produce a toxin that if ingested can result in botulism, a disease that may cause paralysis or death. Cases of botulism from processed food are extremely rare in the U.S.

Symptoms of botulism can include: double-vision, droopy eyelids, altered voice, trouble with speaking or swallowing, and paralysis on both sides of the body that progresses from the neck down, possibly followed by difficulty in breathing. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should seek immediate medical attention.

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has sent a health advisory to local health departments and hospitals alerting health care providers of the severity of this illness and the recent cases associated with drinking the implicated carrot juice.

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