

FSIS ISSUES PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT FOR FROZEN CHICKEN AND TURKEY POT PIES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9, 2007 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is investigating a Missouri establishment that on October 9 voluntarily ceased operations due to reported illnesses linked to their products. Banquet brand and generic store brand frozen not-ready-to-eat pot pie products with “P-9” printed on the side of the package may be the potential source of reported illnesses caused by *Salmonella* based on epidemiological evidence collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and State public health departments.

On October 3, the CDC launched a multi-state case control study with detailed questions on chicken and egg consumption. Based on additional information provided by the Minnesota Department of Health, CDC added questions to the study on October 5 focusing on frozen chicken or turkey pot pie product consumption. FSIS was notified on October 5 that states had identified an FSIS-regulated product to the CDC as the potential source of contamination.

After discussions with CDC and the states throughout the weekend, on October 8 FSIS dispatched specially trained investigators to gather additional information at the federally inspected establishment producing these frozen pot pie products.

The Agency is advising consumers not to eat or to discard these chicken or turkey pot pie products until we are able to determine the source, products and potential production dates of contamination and to verify proper cooking instructions for these not-ready-to-eat products. We will provide updates as further information becomes available.

ConAgra, which is cooperating in the investigation, will provide information regarding these products at: www.conagrafoods.com. Consumers with questions about these products may contact the company hotline at (866) 484-8671. Information on reported illnesses will be available at www.cdc.gov/salmonella/

Consumers with food safety questions can “Ask Karen,” the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp#Question. The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

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NOTE: Access news releases and other information at the FSIS Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>