



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
300 N. San Antonio Road • Santa Barbara, CA 93110
(805) 681-5102 • FAX (805) 681-5191
www.countyofsb.org

PRESS RELEASE

November 27, 2018

News Media Contact:

Jackie Ruiz, MPH
Public Information Officer
(805) 896-1057 (cell)
jacruiz@sbcphd.org

HEALTH OFFICIALS ADVISE RESIDENTS TO AVOID CONSUMING ROMAINE LETTUCE HARVESTED ON THE CENTRAL COAST

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is advising community members to avoid consuming romaine lettuce harvested in the Central Coastal growing regions of northern and central California. This includes romaine lettuce that has been grown in Santa Barbara County. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is advising that U.S. consumers not eat and retailers and restaurants not serve or sell any romaine lettuce harvested from the Central Coastal growing regions of northern and central California due to the *E.coli* outbreak that is under ongoing investigation.

All consumers, restaurants, and retailers are advised to check bags or boxes of romaine lettuce for a label indicating where the lettuce was harvested. If you do not know where your romaine lettuce was harvested, do not eat it, sell it, or serve it; you are advised to throw it away. This advice includes all types of romaine lettuce, such as whole heads of romaine, hearts of romaine, and bags and boxes of precut lettuce and salad mixes that contain romaine. Wash and sanitize drawers or shelves in refrigerators where romaine was stored. Learn how here: <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/communication/clean-refrigerator-steps.html>

Contact your healthcare provider if you have diarrhea that lasts for more than 3 days or is accompanied by high fever, blood in the stool, or so much vomiting that you cannot keep liquids down and you pass very little urine. Most people start feeling sick 3 to 4 days after eating or drinking something that contains the bacteria. However, illnesses can start anywhere from 1 to 10 days after exposure.

It is important to note that romaine lettuce labeled with a harvest region outside of the Central Coastal growing regions of northern and central California is not linked to this outbreak.

Forty-three people have been infected with the outbreak strain of Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* O157:H7 from 12 states, with 11 cases in California. Illnesses started on dates ranging from October 8, 2018 to October 31, 2018. Sixteen people have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported. To date, there have been no Shiga toxin-producing cases associated with this outbreak in Santa Barbara County.