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CDC searching for source of E. Coli outbreak

The Kane County Health Department is advising residents that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are continuing the investigation into a multistate outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 illnesses likely linked to chopped romaine lettuce sourced from the winter growing areas in Yuma, Ariz.

According to the CDC, most of the sick patients reported eating salad at a restaurant, and chopped romaine was the only common ingredient identified among the salads eaten. The restaurants used bagged chopped romaine to make the salads. At this time, ill people are not reporting whole heads or hearts of romaine.

Trace-back investigations to determine the source of the chopped romaine the restaurants have yet to turn up a specific grower, distributor, or brand, but the early investigation suggests it came from the Yuma, Az., growing region. An investigation to further narrow the source is still under way.

CDC reports that 35 people in 11 states have become ill. One of the cases is an Illinois resident, although not of Kane County. These people reported becoming ill in the time period of March 22 and March 31. Twenty-six (93%) of 28 people interviewed reported consuming romaine lettuce in the week before their illness started.

The CDC is urging restaurants and retailers not to serve any chopped romaine, including salad mixes, from the Yuma, Az., region. Also, it advised the two groups to ask suppliers about the source of chopped romaine lettuce.

Consumers who have chopped romaine in their homes, including salads and salad mixes, should not eat it and should throw it away, even if no one got sick. Before buying chopped romaine in a store or eating it at a restaurant, consumers should confirm that it is not from the growing region implicated in the outbreak.

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Consumers who have [symptoms of STEC infection](#) should contact their health care provider to report their symptoms and receive care. Although many infections resolve in 5-7 days, they can result in serious illness, including a potentially serious condition called hemolytic uremic syndrome.

More information about the outbreak is available on the CDC Website by clicking [here](#).

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