Apple Slices Recalled due to Listeria Danger

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sliced apples distributed to fast-food and grocery chains across the country are among packaged products being recalled due to possible listeria contamination.

No illnesses have been reported, but listeria was found on equipment used to produce apple products by Missa Bay LLC, owned by Ready Pac Foods Inc. of Swedesboro, N.J.

Packaged apple slices distributed to McDonald's and Burger King in some states are included in the recall, as are some packaged fruit, veggies, salads and sandwiches containing apples distributed to Wawa convenience store and Wegman's grocery chains, as well as various apple and fruit snacks with "Ready Pac" labels and apple salad kits with a "Safeway Farms" label.

The recalled snacks have use-by dates of July 8 through Aug. 20, the company said. People should check their refrigerators for products with those use-by dates, the company said, and it asked retailers to check store shelves and inventories to make sure none of the packages are there.

Missa Bay announced the voluntary recall on Friday, saying a total of 293,488 cases and 296,224 individual units went to 36 states and the District of Columbia. People who may have purchased the recalled products are asked to record use-by dates and UPC codes and contact Ready Pac at 800-800-7822. More information on the more than two dozen products recalled and the states involved is available on the company's website at www.readypac.com [1] .

Listeria is a bacteria that causes food poisoning and is especially dangerous to pregnant women. While a pregnant woman may experience mild, flu-like symptoms, the illness caused by listeria can lead to miscarriage, premature delivery or life-threatening infection in newborns.

Symptoms in people besides pregnant women can include fever and muscle aches, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions.

An outbreak of listeria in cantaloupes last year was linked to 30 deaths and one report of a pregnant woman who had a miscarriage while she was sick.

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[1] http://www.readypac.com/