

# Epi Update for Friday, March 15, 2024

## CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)

### Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

Items for this week's Epi Update include

- **Classification of mpox samples and waste**
- **FDA ensures safety of cinnamon products sold in US**
- **Spring holiday food safety**
- ***Salmonella* and Easter chicks**
- **Infographic: Starting a backyard flock? Don't wing it.**

#### **Classification of mpox samples and waste**

On March 11, the U.S. Department of Transportation released a Safety Advisory Notice clarifying that diagnostic samples and clinical waste containing mpox virus in Clade I or II should be designated as Category B infectious substances, except when they contain or are contaminated with cultures of Clade I mpox. Clade 1 viral cultures (i.e., materials containing or contaminated with intentionally propagated virus) are still Category A infectious substances.

CDC analyzed domestic cases of Clade II mpox since 2022, including patients with severe illness. CDC believes the countermeasures used against Clade II are expected to be effective against Clade I, and most forms of Clade I mpox (other than viral cultures) are appropriately classified as Category B infectious substances based on the risk posed in transportation.

To view the full Safety Advisory Notice, visit [www.phmsa.dot.gov/transporting-infectious-substances/safety-advisory-notice-classification-mpoxv-diagnostic-samples](http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/transporting-infectious-substances/safety-advisory-notice-classification-mpoxv-diagnostic-samples).

#### **FDA ensures safety of cinnamon products sold in US**

FDA has issued a press release highlighting additional steps being taken to address concerns about elevated lead levels in cinnamon following the recent incident associated with certain cinnamon apple sauce pouches that resulted in lead poisoning in young children. FDA sent a letter to all cinnamon manufacturers, processors, distributors and facility operators in the U.S., reminding them of the requirement to implement controls to prevent contamination from potential chemical hazards in food, including ground cinnamon products.

In addition, FDA recently recommended the voluntary recall of certain ground cinnamon products sold by a number of brands at six different retail chains that were found to contain elevated levels of lead: La Fiesta, Marcum, MTCI, SWAD, Supreme Tradition, and El Chilar. The lead levels found in the newly recalled ground cinnamon products are significantly lower than lead levels in cinnamon in the recalled apple sauce pouches removed from the market this past fall. Therefore, these ground cinnamon products do not pose the same level of risk to human health as the apple sauce pouches but could be unsafe for prolonged use.

To view the full press release, including detailed recall information, visit [www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-steps-ensure-safety-cinnamon-products-sold-us](http://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-steps-ensure-safety-cinnamon-products-sold-us).

## Spring holiday food safety

The three major holidays of Easter, Eid, and Passover all take place during the spring season, and warmer weather brings increased opportunities for friends and family to gather. These spring gatherings may be outdoors or include meals prepared and served for large numbers of people.

Here are a few food safety tips to stay safe when preparing, serving, eating meals with loved ones this spring:

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water before, during, and after preparing food.
- Prevent cross-contamination of foods and surfaces. Use separate cutting boards for raw meat/poultry and ready to eat foods such as fruits and vegetables.
- Do not leave frozen meat or poultry at room temperature to thaw for more than two hours. Even though the center may be frozen, the outer layer may be at a temperature that allows bacteria to multiply.
- Cook food to a safe internal temperature, as measured by a food thermometer.
  - 165 F: Poultry (whole or ground)
  - 160 F: Ground meats and egg dishes.
  - 145 F: Fish, beef, pork, lamb, and ham.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Do not leave perishable food out at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Use or freeze leftovers within four days. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers in small, shallow containers.

For more spring food safety tips, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/news-press-releases/spring-holidays-are-a-treat-dont-let-bacteria-ruin-your-feast](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/news-press-releases/spring-holidays-are-a-treat-dont-let-bacteria-ruin-your-feast).

## Salmonella and Easter chicks

*Salmonella* is among the most common causes of foodborne illness and outbreaks in Iowa. These bacteria can also be spread by direct contact with animals, especially reptiles and birds. Contact with baby chicks is a known risk factor for *Salmonella* and increases around Easter.

Follow these steps to reduce the risk of *Salmonella* from handling live birds:

- Children less than 5 years of age or others at high risk shouldn't handle poultry or items contaminated by poultry.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling poultry or their droppings.
- Don't kiss or snuggle poultry and then touch your face or mouth.
- Do not let poultry live inside your home.
- Do not wash the bird's food and water dishes in the kitchen sink.

For more information, visit, [www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals/backyard-poultry.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals/backyard-poultry.html).

For a checklist to make sure you have everything you need for your backyard flock, visit [www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdfs/DFWED-Backyard-Flock-Checklist-508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdfs/DFWED-Backyard-Flock-Checklist-508.pdf).

Infographic: Starting a backyard flock? Don't wing it.

**Starting  
a backyard  
flock?**

*Don't  
wing it.*

**CDC has resources to keep you  
and your birds healthy.**  
Visit [www.cdc.gov/backyardpoultry](http://www.cdc.gov/backyardpoultry) to learn more.

To view in full size, visit [www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdfs/DFWED-Feed-Store-Poster-508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdfs/DFWED-Feed-Store-Poster-508.pdf).

**Have a healthy and happy week!**  
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology  
800-362-2736