



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Public Affairs

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State Health Director urges caution on consuming Korean imported shellfish following FDA alert

RALEIGH – North Carolina State Health Director Laura Gerald, M.D., is warning North Carolinians and visitors to avoid eating any fresh or frozen shellfish imported from South Korea following action by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The warning includes shucked or shell-on oysters, clams, mussels and roe-on or in-the-shell scallops.

The FDA has removed all South Korean shellfish shippers from the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers List (ICSSL) as of May 1. Domestic shellfish processed by North Carolina-certified dealers is not affected by this warning.

”Based on the FDA’s action, we are concerned that any shellfish from South Korea that was shipped prior to May 1 from unapproved sources may be contaminated and unsafe to eat,” Dr. Gerald said. “Consumers are potentially in danger of contracting food-borne illness, such as norovirus, if they eat food that is contaminated.”

At present, the N.C. Division of Public Health has received no reports of illnesses associated with the Korean-produced shellfish products in North Carolina.

The FDA cannot confirm the origin and source of many of the shellfish contained in the potentially affected products, sold in local markets and prepackaged food products imported from Korea. The FDA is reporting that as of this time, canned shellfish are not considered to have been affected. No recall has been issued.

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries has notified its certified shellfish dealers to recall and hold any affected product; however, the vast majority of the Korean products are sold by dealers located outside of North Carolina. Consumers are encouraged to examine the packaging of and shellfish purchases to determine if they were imported from a South Korean source. For more about potentially affected products, contact Patricia Smith, with the Division of Marine Fisheries, at 252-808-8025 or Patricia.Smith@ncdenr.gov.

For more information on food-related illness, visit:

Food-Borne Illness – <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/diseases/food.html>

Norovirus – <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/diseases/norovirus.html>

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Location: 101 Blair Drive • Adams Building • Raleigh, N.C. 27603

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