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Public Health Notice: Outbreak of *Salmonella* infections linked to Malichita brand cantaloupes

November 17, 2023 - Original Notice

On this page

- [Why you should take note](#)
- [Investigation summary](#)
- [Symptoms](#)
- [What you should do to protect your health](#)
- [Epidemiological information](#)
- [Additional information](#)
- [Media contact](#)
- [Public inquiries](#)





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Why you should take note

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is collaborating with federal and provincial public health partners, the [United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (U.S. CDC), and the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) to investigate an outbreak of *Salmonella* infections in three provinces: British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.

Based on the investigation findings to date, consumption of Malichita brand cantaloupe has been identified as the likely source of the outbreak. Some of the individuals who became sick reported having eaten cantaloupe before their illnesses occurred.

The CFIA issued food recall warnings on November 1 and November 14 for Malichita brand cantaloupes sold between October 11 and November 14, 2023. The recalled product was distributed in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and possibly other provinces and territories. Additional secondary recalls have been issued for products that were made using the recalled Malichita brand cantaloupe. For more information on the recalled product, please consult CFIA's [recall notice](#).

The CFIA is continuing its food safety investigation, which may lead to the recall of other products. If other products are recalled, the CFIA will notify the public through additional food recall warnings.



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To prevent illness, do not eat, serve, use, sell, or distribute Malichita brand cantaloupe or any products made with Malichita brand cantaloupe. If you are unable to verify the brand of cantaloupe it is recommended to discard the cantaloupe. This advice applies to individuals, as well as retailers, distributors, manufacturers, food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, and facilities such as hospitals, long-term care homes and daycares, across Canada.

This public health notice will be updated as the investigation evolves.

Investigation summary

As of November 17, there have been 14 laboratory-confirmed cases of *Salmonella* Soahanina and Sundsvall illness linked to this outbreak in the following provinces: British Columbia (3), Ontario (3) and Quebec (8). Additional *Salmonella* infections are under investigation and more illnesses associated with this outbreak may be confirmed. Individuals became sick between mid-October and early-November 2023. Three individuals have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported. Individuals who became ill are between 0 to 100 years of age. The majority of cases (57%) are female.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued food recall warnings on November 1 and November 14 for Malichita brand cantaloupes sold between October 11 and November 14, 2023. Through the CFIA investigation the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* that made people sick was found in a sample of the recalled Malichita brand cantaloupe.



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More recent illnesses may be reported in the outbreak because there is a period between when a person becomes ill and when the illness is reported to public health officials. For this outbreak, the illness reporting period is between 2 and 4 weeks.

The U.S. CDC is also investigating an outbreak of *Salmonella* Sundsvall illnesses linked to cantaloupes that is the same genetic strain as illnesses reported in this outbreak.

Symptoms

Symptoms typically start 6 to 72 hours after exposure to *Salmonella* bacteria, and usually last for 4-7 days.

Symptoms may include:

- fever
- chills
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- headache
- abdominal cramps

People who are infected with *Salmonella* bacteria can spread *Salmonella* to other people several days to several weeks after they have become infected, even if they don't have symptoms. *Salmonella* can spread by person to person contact and contaminated surfaces. Most people who become ill from a *Salmonella* infection will recover fully after a few days without treatment, but it can also cause severe illness and hospitalization.



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Anyone can become sick with a *Salmonella* infection. If you think you're experiencing symptoms, contact your health care provider.

Those at higher risk for serious illness include:

- [older adults](#)
- [young children](#)
- [people who are pregnant](#)
- [people with weakened immune systems](#)

What you should do to protect your health

The following advice applies to individuals, as well as retailers, distributors, manufacturers, food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, and facilities such as hospitals, long-term care homes and daycares, across Canada:

- Do not eat, serve, use, sell or distribute Malichita brand cantaloupe or any products made with Malichita brand cantaloupe.
- Check to see if you have Malichita brand cantaloupe or any products made with the cantaloupe stored at home or in your freezer, including pre-cut cantaloupe in fruit medleys. If you do, throw them out and wash your hands.
- [If you are unable to verify the brand of cantaloupe, it is recommended to throw it out.](#)
- Clean and sanitize all surfaces and storage areas that Malichita brand cantaloupe or any products made with the cantaloupe may have come in contact with, including countertops, containers, utensils, freezers and refrigerators.



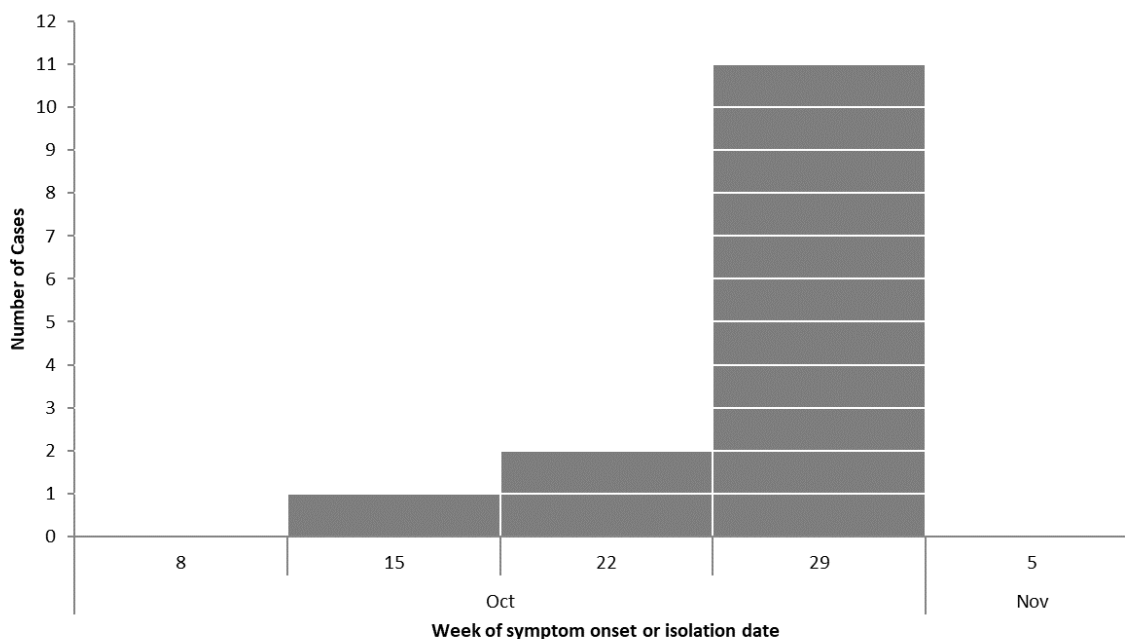
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- If you have been diagnosed with a *Salmonella* infection or any other gastrointestinal illness, do not cook food for other people.

Epidemiological information

[Figure 1](#) is an epidemiological curve for this outbreak. Outbreak investigators use this information to show when illnesses begin, when they peak, and when they trail off. It can take several weeks from the time a person becomes ill to when the illness is reported and testing confirms a link to the outbreak. Data are available for 14 cases.

Figure 1. Number of people infected with *Salmonella Soahanina* and *Salmonella Sundsvall*





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Table 1 – Number of people infected with *Salmonella* Soahanina and *Salmonella* Sundsvall, by week

Week of symptom onset or isolation date	Number of cases
2023-10-08	0
2023-10-15	1
2023-10-22	2
2023-10-29	11
2023-11-05	0

Additional information

- [Salmonellosis \(*Salmonella*\)](#)
- [Safe food handling practices](#)
- [Recalls, advisories and safety alerts](#)
- [Produce Safety](#)
- U.S. CDC's [Salmonella](#) Sundsvall investigation notice
- [CFIA's Food Recall Warning – November 1, 2023](#)

Media contact



Public Health
Agency of Canada

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