

**Transcript for FDA Media Briefing on Salmonella Outbreak**

**FTS-HHS FDA**

**Moderator: Michael Herndon  
July 17, 2008  
1:15 pm CT**

Coordinator: Excuse me and welcome. Thank you for standing by.

At this time all participants are in a listen only mode.

During the question and answer session, please press star 1 on your phone.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

Now I'll turn today's meeting to Michael Herndon. You may begin.

Michael Herndon: Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen welcome. I'm Mike Herndon with FDA's Media Relations Staff. Thanks and welcome to the briefing on the salmonella investigation.

We have speakers today from the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

We also have several FDA Officials here to answer any questions later on in this briefing.

Our two speakers this afternoon are Dr. David Acheson, associate commissioner for Food with the FDA, and Dr. Robert Tauxe, the deputy director, Division of Food Borne Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases for CDC.

Our subject matter experts today are Miss Melinda Plaisier, associate commissioner, Office of International Programs, Dr. Stephen Sundlof, director, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, and Dr. Steven Solomon, deputy director, Office of Regional Operations.

We'll have a brief question and answer segment after the opening remarks. But at this time I'd like to turn it over to Dr. David Acheson.

David Acheson: Thank you Mike. This is David Acheson, associate commissioner for foods at FDA. I first would like to welcome you all to this call. I apologize that we're a few minutes late getting started, but I know there were a lot of people trying to dial in at the top of the hour.

We'll follow our usual format asking Dr. Tauxe from CDC to give his update, and then come back to FDA and I'll provide you with our update. So, Dr. Tauxe?

Robert Tauxe: Yes thank you very much David. And good afternoon to everybody. This large salmonella outbreak is continuing. The case count today is 1,220 reported cases from 42 states, the District of Columbia and Canada with at least 224 persons hospitalized. The latest reported date that an illness began is July 4th.

The outbreak appears to on-going as I said, with 20 of the 30 new cases being reported each day. However, if we look at the number of persons who are -

who became ill each day, and if we look at that day-by-day, we can see that there was a decrease in the intensity of the outbreak that began in mid-June.

We will shortly be putting a graph on our Web site that shows the number of people that became ill day-by-day. And this number began to increase as the outbreak began in early May.

It reached a plateau from May 20th through June 10th, and during that time about 33 persons reported that they became ill each day. From the period June 11th through June 20th, about 19 persons became ill each day, which is a decrease from the earlier higher plateau.

It's difficult to interpret the days that are more recent than June 20th because there is an inherent delay in reporting. And that reporting delay means that people who really became ill a week or two ago have simply not been reported yet.

However, I would say that as - although it appears that the outbreak is ongoing and we do not have evidence that it is over, it does appear to have decreased in intensity beginning in mid-June.

And let me turn it back to you Dr. Acheson.

David Acheson: Thank you very much. This is David Acheson again at FDA. Today FDA wants to alert consumers that we are removing the tomato warning. As of today, FDA Officials believe that consumers may now enjoy all types of fresh tomatoes available on the domestic market without concern of becoming infected with Salmonella Saintpaul bacteria.

FDA's removing this warning, which has been in place since June 7th, stating that consumers should avoid certain types of fresh tomatoes due to a possible contamination to the Salmonella Saintpaul outbreak. And we'll be updating our Web site later today to reflect that.

Second important point with regard to peppers. While we are changing our consumer guidance on tomatoes, we do reiterate the current consumer guidance with regard to vulnerable populations i.e., the elderly, young children, immune compromised, that they should continue to avoid eating both jalapeno and Serrano peppers as this investigation continues.

Obviously a key question of why this action with regard to changing consumer advice around tomatoes, and why now. And it speaks to the evolution of the investigation as we continue to gather information, science, and evaluate it.

And part of that process we have determined a couple of important points as of today. Essentially that the farms producing the tomatoes identified through the epidemiology and tracebacks that we've been talking about over the last few weeks. During that investigation, those farms are no longer shipping product.

Obviously as you're aware this outbreak has been going on for quite some time. And the farms that have been implicated through our tracebacks are no longer shipping tomatoes.

Second point is as the testing of various critical points of this tomato supply chain, which again we have talked about before in terms of looking at those points in the supply chain, where all these tomatoes flow through and may have been points of which they could have got contaminated. Which includes

the farms that have been identified through these tracebacks and the distribution in the packing warehouses.

We found no evidence of contamination with Salmonella Saintpaul - the outbreak strain during those investigations.

If we think of the timeframe here, while the first case control study that was conducted by CDC and the states at the beginning of this outbreak did very clearly indicate a strong association between the consumption between certain types of fresh tomatoes and illness caused by the Salmonella Saintpaul.

As I said already, it's highly unlikely that any of those fresh tomatoes which were on the market at the onset of this outbreak, bearing in mind that goes back to mid-April, that any of those fresh tomatoes are currently on the market in any form.

In addition, as I've already said, the farms in Florida and Mexico, which as you all know were the focus of our investigation, are no longer producing the tomatoes. And we've had no positive cultures for Salmonella Saintpaul from any of these farms.

So it's a combination of events that have come together through the analysis of the science regarding the timing, the infectious data, the sampling data that has led to this change in consumer advice.

In terms of the current focus of our investigation, as you've heard from Dr. Tauxe, this outbreak is ongoing although there are certainly some encouraging signs that it may be slowing down a little bit.

FDA is not relaxing at all even though maybe the outbreak is beginning to wane a little bit. But our focus is continuing on jalapeno and Serrano peppers.

And in conjunction with state and regulatory counterparts we are continuing to conduct a nationwide surveillance looking for these peppers that may be contaminated with Salmonella Saintpaul.

As with the tomato assignments that we did previously, we are focusing on areas of interest. Specifically import examinations and sampling and domestic infections and sampling. And any retail surveillance.

So we are following the same type track that we did with tomatoes through the tracebacks of identifying those critical points in the supply chain. But we believe it's important to visit, in fact, sample if necessary, both domestically in the United States, as well as with regard to imports.

One final point is that in collaboration with Mexican officials, FDA has dispatched a team to Mexico to undertake an investigation of a specific farm in Mexico because the traceback, at least at this point, has that farm in the chain of the traceback.

That does not mean, and I do not want to imply that, that farm is the source of this problem. But as with tomatoes, we're looking at all points on the supply chain which are critical where we believe there's a reasonable likelihood that the contamination could have occurred. So we're getting out to all the places at the same time.

With that, that's the end of the specific points that I wanted to make. I think the key point here is that we are lifting the tomato warning. And we believe

that consumers can now enjoy all types of fresh tomatoes that are available on the domestic market in the United States.

With that, I'll hand it back to Mike Herndon.

Michael Herndon: Thank you Dr. Acheson. At this time ladies and gentlemen we'll take your questions. And as always, be fair to everyone. Please limit yourselves to one question and one follow-up, and please state your name and affiliation.

Operator we'll take the first question.

Coordinator: Thank you. We'll begin the question and answer session. If you'd like to ask a question, press star 1. And please say your name and your affiliation when prompted.

To withdraw a question, you can press star 2. One moment and I'll bring up our first question.

And our first question comes from Miriam Falco with CNN. Miriam you may ask your question.

Miriam Falco: Hi. Thank you for taking the questions. I just want to be clear. You're not absolving or saying tomatoes never were the cause. You're just saying there are no fresh tomatoes available anymore that could be linked to the Salmonella Saint Paul outbreak. Is that correct?

David Acheson: That is correct. This is David Acheson. That is correct.

Miriam Falco: And you were very specific. You said you found no evidence of Salmonella Saint Paul at the farms that you were at. Did you find evidence of anything - of any other contaminants?

David Acheson: That's part of an ongoing investigation. The reason that the investigators went down there was to look if there's any evidence of the outbreak strain on that. And we found - we did not find that.

The investigators have come back. We're looking at the reports that they are putting together. And we will be working with the Mexican Government to address any concerns that may come out of that.

Miriam Falco: But the obvious question is you have no - still no idea what caused the contamination that led to the 1,220 illness that are reported so far.

David Acheson: We - we still do not know where the original contamination point was. And we're pursuing that as hard today as we were at the beginning.

Michael Herndon: Thank you. Thanks Miriam. Next question please.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from David Mitchell with The Packer.

David Mitchell: Hi. You said that consumers can go ahead and eat domestic tomatoes. Are you still investigating salmonella and cilantro in Mexico? Are those areas going to be cleared at some point?

David Acheson: Let me clarify. When I said - this is David Acheson. When I said domestic tomatoes, I mean the tomatoes that are currently available in the United States irrespective of where they come from.



David Mitchell: Are there Mexican states that - I think there are still two states that haven't been cleared. What is their status?

David Acheson: Well I repeat. Any tomatoes that are coming onto the market in the United States, irrespective of where they come from, we no longer have concerns around them.

You're alluding to the point of the exclusion list that we have. There is now no need to maintain that list. It was placed for specific reasons. With this new announcement that list will go away.

David Mitchell: Okay. Thanks.

Michael Herndon: Thanks David. Next question please.

Coordinator: Next question Justin Blum with Bloomberg News.

Justin Blum: Hi thanks for taking my call. Dr. Acheson I'm just wondering, with tomatoes are you done with all the traceback work? Or are you still tracing back tomatoes? And the farm you're talking about in Mexico, is that a farm that does tomatoes? Or only jalapenos?

David Acheson: Thanks. This is David Acheson. The - all of the tomato tracebacks that we have done have indicated - following back, doing the testing, there's no current concerns which is why we changed the consumer advice.

Obviously this outbreak is ongoing. If we get a lead or a suggestion or some new indication that tomatoes need to be re-examined we'll certainly do that. But right now we don't have any concerns with regards to tomatoes.

Let me clarify. I said farm. I probably should have been more specific. It is actually a packer. It is not a specific farm. It's a packer which receives tomatoes - I'm sorry, excuse me. It receives peppers from a number of farms. Let me clarify, it's not a specific farm.

I do not believe that they grow tomatoes. And if they do it is not our focus of interest.

Justin Blum: Okay. And if I could ask one follow up question, and that is to both of you. At this point, do FDA and CDC think it's more likely that tomatoes are the cause? Or jalapenos are the cause? Or is it impossible to know which is more likely at this point?

David Acheson: Well, I think this starts with the case control studies. Which, as I said, clearly indicate an association - a firm association with tomatoes. So, there's every reason to believe based on the epidemiology that the first cases were linked to tomatoes.

The point is that the cases have continued despite all the actions that have been put in place - the consumer advice. Which raises the question whether now something else is responsible, which is most likely and it is not tomatoes currently coming onto the market. Hence the focus on the peppers.

There are certainly scenarios where we could have started with one type of produce and shifted to another if there was contamination in a packing shed or a washing station where two types of produce were going through.

So it's not beyond the bounds of possibility that the contamination has moved from one type of produce to another.

Rob I don't know if you want to add anything with regards to tomatoes?

Robert Tauxe: Sure. Thanks David. Yes. I think we've been considering this very actively in our current investigations and in review of our previous studies. And it's clear to us that tomatoes do not explain all of the - clusters do not explain all of the cases.

And it's also clear to us that jalapenos by themselves - jalapeno peppers also do not explain all the clusters or all the cases.

And so we are seriously considering hypothesis or scenarios as you say, that might involve more than one produce type.

Michael Herndon: Thanks Dr. Tauxe. Next question please.

Coordinator: Next we have Julie Schmidt with USA Today.

Julie Schmidt: Hi. Thanks for taking my call. So, is it - I mean, is it possible that - are you guys saying it's not possible that tomatoes were never implicated?

David Acheson: This is David Acheson. You had a bunch of negatives in there. I'm not quite sure I could - I sorted them out.

Julie Schmidt: Is it possible that tomatoes just really were not any of this?

David Acheson: The science that we're working off of with the epidemiology - the case control study. And as we said, there's a very clear association. We have not found Salmonella Saintpaul in any of the testing that we've done of tomatoes or on the sites.

Now, it's impossible to prove a negative. So, if we found a positive tomato we'd have had assurance that yeah tomatoes were contaminated. Beside the fact that we cannot prove that they were never contaminated is obviously going to remain with us forever.

Is it remotely possible that tomatoes were not responsible? I mean we can't say that's impossible. Sure. But, the science at the beginning of this outbreak led us down the road to believe a strong association with tomatoes.

And the case control study, as I've said, conducted by CDC made that strong association. And FDA whose primary role is to protect public health acted on that information, which we have used many times. The epidemiological studies have been used repeatedly absence a positive sample.

So, we stand behind that science that set us on the tomato track to begin with. The important this is that it changes. It evolves. And we have to evolve with it.

Michael Herndon: Thanks. Next question please.

Coordinator: Okay. Next question comes from Lisa Stark with ABC News.

Lisa Stark: Can - you somewhat answered it. Because my question was how could have been the tomatoes and now it's not the tomatoes? If in fact it's something other than toma - if it's something was tomatoes and now it's something different, would that mean it would have to be further down the food chain? In other words, the contamination wouldn't have occurred at the farm level, but further down the distribution chain?

David Acheson: I've pointed out that there's a variety of scenarios where they could both have become contaminated. You could take this right back to the farm. There was some speculation that maybe farmers grew tomatoes and then planted peppers. I think that's very unlikely.

The - but the scenario that a large farm may have been growing tomatoes in one part of the farm and peppers in another part of the farm, and both were going either through a common contaminated washing station, packing station. Or both were being irrigated with contaminated water is not beyond the bounds of possibility.

That's part of what getting down to the farm tells us. Is that going on? And is it possible? So far we haven't had any strong evidence of that, but, you know, where - in terms of speculation, you cannot rule out the farm as a source even implicating more than one product.

Michael Herndon: Okay. Thank you. Next question please.

Robert Tauxe: I'm sorry. This is Dr. Tauxe at CDC. I would just like to say that we agree that the information implicating tomatoes early in the outbreak was quite strong. And that we felt it was very likely to be the source.

It is difficult to prove a negative as Dr. Acheson just said. And it may well be that we will not - we will not ever be able to prove a negative. I think that we have been interested and concerned from the beginning that there are a lot of foods that are served together, they're served in food items like sauces and salsas that involve several different food items that may be shipped together. They may be stored together in the kitchen and they may as Dr. Acheson mentioned, even be produced together.

But that joining of possible ingredients even before they reach the final kitchen is one of the concerns that we have.

Michael Herndon: Thank you Dr. Tauxe. Next question please.

Coordinator: Next question comes from Jim Downing from The Sacramento Bee.

Jim Downing: Hi. Thanks for taking my question. Can you talk a bit about why the jalapeno and Serrano warning is just for immune-compromised individuals rather than everybody?

David Acheson: Yeah. (Rob) do you want to start off with that?

Robert Tauxe: Sure. I'd be glad to. I think it is a reflection of the strength of the association - the certainty that we feel about the issue. At the beginning of the outbreak when we had first information that associated illness with tomatoes, we did the same thing.

And we said that was now restricted to New Mexico and Texas early on. We said that it was particularly of concern for those who are at greatest risk for severe illness. The very young, the elderly and those with immunocompromise.

And we've done that in the past with other risks, really trying to put a message out to protect those at greatest risk. And that with the past we down with the jalapeno pepper as well.

Jim Downing: Okay. So you're - bottom line though is that you're less confident now about jalapenos than you were back on June 7th about tomatoes?

Robert Tauxe: And by June 7th there was also beginning to be information about sub-types of tomatoes that allowed a more targeted and refined message, as far as tomatoes of certain types or tomatoes from certain locations.

And as far as I know, there's no information like that for the peppers.

Michael Herndon: Thank you.

Jim Downing: Thank you.

Michael Herndon: Next question please.

Coordinator: Next question comes from Lauren Neergaard with The Associated Press.

Lauren Neergaard: Hi. Thanks for taking my question. I'm a little confused actually about the tomatoes and peppers link. Are you going back to the very beginning to the New Mexico case consult study and saying look did we just miss peppers then? And it was that peppers and tomatoes were mixed?

Robert Tauxe: I'll be glad to answer that one. This is Dr. Tauxe at CDC. We have not so far attempted to re-interview people who may have become ill at the end of April or the beginning of May about what all they might have had in their kitchens, or what they might have had to eat.

We have not done that. Or we're not doing that now. We are interviewing cases who have become ill more recently whose memory might be fresher to see if very detailed interviews in person might - might yield more information than what one might get from a questionnaire.

Lauren Neergaard: Okay. But that still doesn't explain to me why the link? Why tomatoes then and pepper now?

Robert Tauxe: Yes. It's really - it's actually two different kinds of information. And that's part of what's been complicated about this. Early in the outbreak there were no clusters that had been reported. And we were talking to individuals about things that they had eaten before - in the days before they became ill often over the phone, not often in person. And then - later in the outbreak when clusters became more common, when there were several large clusters reported, those clusters were investigated and there the interview was about what one might have eaten at a particular restaurant on a particular evening. A much more crisp kind of information.

The early case control study implicated - or showed that there was a strong association with tomatoes. It was the more recent investigation of the clusters which particularly pointed to an association with jalapeno peppers.

So it's kind of two different kinds of information obtained in two different ways at two different points in the outbreak.

Lauren Neergaard: I guess what I'm trying to get at is the biologic rationale for why there would be those two. I mean you early on were saying well maybe they were, you know, one was grown in the field earlier and then something else was harvested. Or maybe they mixed in a packing shed. And I don't hear you saying that today.

David Acheson: This is David Acheson. I am saying that the science led us down the track of saying a strong association with tomatoes. Now the science with different case control study is raising the question of jalapeno and Serrano peppers.



One question that's being raised is well, was the case control study the first time around - was the jalapeno peppers buried in there somewhere that didn't surface?

Hindsight is really good at trying to figure things out. At the time, that was the best information that we had. There are certainly scenarios whereby it could have been both.

And that was the point I was trying to make. The scenarios at a farm level. The scenarios in a packing shed and a washing station. Whether it be on the farm or some subsequent place.

Michael Herndon: Thank you. Thank you Dr. Acheson. Next question please.

Coordinator: Next we have Annys Shin with Washington Post.

Annys Shin: Hi. Thanks for taking my question. I guess at this point you've probably done scores of tracebacks, maybe more. I'm wondering in all your tracebacks, have you come across a distribution or packing shed where tomatoes and jalapenos, you know, crossed paths I guess? Or were in the same place maybe at different times?

David Acheson: This is David Acheson. The short answer's yes.

Annys Shin: Okay.

Michael Herndon: Did you have a follow up Annys?

Annys Shin: I have a follow up, but it's sort of not related. Which is given that the - I guess the produce folks have been saying that the tomatoes coming - the fields that

were producing in April stopped producing a while ago. I guess what is the reason for lifting it now as opposed to earlier?

Robert Tauxe: Well they may have been saying that. But certainly our investigations on the farms that we've been to have demonstrated that they were shipping I think, well in towards the middle end of June. And if you consider that the self-life of a tomato is three weeks, we're getting close to the point where we now got confidence that they're no longer around.

Michael Herndon: Thank you. Next question please.

Coordinator: Next question comes from Sally Shultz from Feedster.

Sally Shultz: Yes. Thank you for taking my call. As this outbreak continues, it just appears that the science is extremely complex on these issues. What kind of confidence do you have that in the event of, using this as an example, in the event of an intentional displacing outbreak that you would be able to move any more quickly.

David Acheson: This is David Acheson. That's a really good question. And obviously this outbreak has illustrated the point that there are areas that we need to focus on to make further improvements.

As you know, the FDA's done a lot in terms of preventative control, raising awareness about the importance of food defense, of dealing with or preventing deliberate attacks on the food supply.

We're all aware that if somebody was really determined to do something, it would be very difficult to prevent it. And this does speak to the importance of response.

And there's no question. There are lessons to be learned from this. Of what can we do to improve tractability amongst other things.

Michael Herndon: Thank you. Next question please.

Coordinator: Next we have John Rockoff from The Baltimore Sun.

John Rockoff: Hi. Thanks. I was just wondering if this is a case of cross-contamination. Are there other previous examples where one item was first contaminated and then it contaminated another, and so we have this long sort of outbreak like in this case?

David Acheson: This is David Acheson. I'm personally not aware of any. And my colleagues here not either - just looking around the room.

But bear in mind that this is not following the trail of a regular all produce outbreak, which usually follows the line of the shelf-life of the product.

And this is going way beyond typical fresh produce. So there's something else going on here which is a little unusual.

And so you need to think outside the box and ask that question.

John Rocha: And then just a quick question about that packer, in Mexico, is it? Do they pack both jalapenos and Serrano peppers? Just jalapenos? Just Serrano's?

David Acheson: Both.

John Rocha: Okay. Thank you.

Michael Herndon: Next question please.

Coordinator: Next question comes from John Wilkerson with FDA Week.

John Wilkerson: Do peppers have a uniform growing season the way that tomatoes seem to have? In other words, will this, you know, possibly run its course and then peppers won't be being shipped any longer? And then they'll also be cleared?

David Acheson: This is David Acheson. I'm not completely familiar with the growing season of peppers. We'll have to get back to you with an answer on that.

Michael Herndon: Yeah we'll get back to you John on that. Do you have a follow up?

John Wilkerson: Yes. when - back when you were still testing the tomatoes, were you testing the meat of the tomatoes along with the surface or the skin of them? Or just the outside?

David Acheson: David Acheson. It was predominantly the outside.

Michael Herndon: Okay.

David Acheson: Thanks John.

Michael Herndon: Next question please.

Coordinator: Next question comes from Elaine Walker with The Miami Herald.

Elaine Walker: Yeah. Hi guys. As part of all this, have you been able to absolve Florida and the Florida tomatoes? I see you're going down to Mexico and looking further

down there, but have you ruled out that any of this outbreak ever came from Florida?

Robert Tauxe: Let me repeat. We're dealing with two components to this. Is the tomato piece where the tracebacks based on the original epidemiological investigations indicated with tomatoes was what - most likely associated? That led us to Florida and Mexico.

We're now at the point where saying the tomatoes that may have come from Florida or Mexico are no longer in the system. Tomatoes that are currently on the market in the US are safe to consume.

The pepper investigation is running in parallel and is now essentially our focus. And the pepper traceback is what has taken us back to the firm in Mexico.

So this is not saying that anybody was absolved. What we're saying right is - informing consumers that tomatoes that are currently in stores and coming onto the market - domestic and imported, are okay.

Michael Herndon: Thank you. Next question please. Operator?

Coordinator: Yes one moment.

Michael Herndon: Okay. Thank you.

Coordinator: Next we have Kris Hundley with The St. Petersburg Times.

Kris Hundley: Hi. I just wanted to be clear. I'm clear on the warning currently in - only regarding fresh Serrano and jalapeno peppers. Would that include both

products itself and in any kind of salsa that you might eat? Or if you could clarify the exact warning you're giving currently.

David Acheson: You're correct. It would - it is focused on the high-risk populations. And it is related to fresh product. And it would pertain to, in whatever form, that those fresh jalapeno and Serrano peppers were being used.

Kris Hundley: Okay. So that could include any salsas - fresh salsas? It would include them?

David Acheson: Yeah.

Kris Hundley: Okay. And also, can you give a timeframe on your second answer from the Mexican packing house that you're going to be visiting?

David Acheson: No.

Kris Hundley: That's not occurring?

David Acheson: Well, you know, we're down there. It's an on-going investigation. And our investigators will follow leads down there as they appear. They arrived within the last 48 hours. They're out right now starting the investigation. It's really impossible to predict how long they'll be there or where that trail will take them.

Kris Hundley: Is - does that packing house also handle tomatoes earlier in the season?

David Acheson: That'll be determined while the investigators - current sense is no they didn't.

Michael Herndon: Thanks. Thanks Kris. Well take two more questions please.

Coordinator: Okay. Next we have Alison Aubrey with NPR.

Alison Aubrey: My question was just asked. I was just trying to get a handle on what you may know about the packing facility. Whether there's other things handled there other than the peppers.

Michael Herndon: Okay. Thank you. Last question please.

Coordinator: Our last question comes from - excuse me, Joan Murphy with Produce News.

Joan Murphy: Yeah I have a question. I mean, could the peppers have caused the entire outbreak? I mean I understand what you're saying that the science - the case control studies pointed to tomatoes in the beginning, but these were isolated cases. Now it's evolved to clusters where you have the opportunity to talk to people. I mean could the peppers have caused the entire outbreak?

Robert Tauxe: We're not in the business of speculating in terms of that. Clearly many will. But we're just trying to follow the science. And that's what we've done.

Joan Murphy: Okay. I have a second question. Since you haven't absolved the Florida - like let's say the southern Florida farms, what does this mean for tomato growers who have to make planning decisions for next year? What are you going to do for them? Are you going to be able to clear certain areas so they can plant? And know that they can sell their product next year.

Robert Tauxe: Well with regard to Florida, we found no problems with the farm or Florida farmers. Okay?

Michael Herndon: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen this concludes today's media teleconference and thanks for your participation.

The replay will be available in about an hour. And will be available for about three days.

If you have any follow up questions, please don't hesitate to call the respective agency.

Please also check the FDA and CDC Web sites for updated information.

And thank you and have a great day.

Coordinator: This is a conference closure. Thank you for attending today's conference. You may now disconnect.

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