

LOSS PREVENTION

LISTERIOSIS OUTBREAK SOUTH AFRICA

6 MARCH 2018

P&I ASSOCIATES (PTY) LTD

This loss prevention notice relates to the Listeriosis outbreak in South Africa – the source is a unique strain of listeria that has caused the world's biggest documented listeriosis outbreak with over 550 cases reported since the start of 2017.

On 2 February 2018 inspectors from the Department of Health and Agriculture and 3 experts from the WHO visited local food manufacturer Enterprise Foods in and took samples of processed meat which tested positive for the ST6-type strain – that has caused 91% of the cases of illness in this outbreak.

Of the 109 patients with the disease interviewed the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), 85 % reported eating ready-to eat meat such as polony and sausages.

Listeriosis affects people with weak immune systems, pregnant women, elderly and babies in the womb who contract it from their mothers during birth. NICD says that the vast majority of people who consume these products will in fact be fine.

Listeria can continue to multiply in uncooked food kept in the fridge. This is why processed meats, smoked meats and soft cheeses that are not cooked are often linked to outbreaks. It is recommended that crew check whether Enterprise Russians/Vienna, Rainbow chicken polony and Enterprise polony have been supplied locally – NICD recommends to use diluted bleach to clean areas where viennas and polony may have been kept.

Local ship chandlers should be able to provide clear laboratory tests for other cold meats etc that are sourced locally.

If you have any queries or concerns then do not hesitate to contact Neil Chetty in our Cape Town office or Vishal Pragraj in our Durban office.

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