

# Food Safety Alert – 2/21/07

KSBW-TV is reporting that BJ's Wholesale Club has announced a recall on mushrooms potentially contaminated with E. coli. The voluntary recall covers pre-packaged Wellsley Farms fresh mushrooms purchased between Feb. 11 and Feb. 19. The company indicated a routine inspection found trace amounts of E. coli from a single lot of sliced mushrooms. There have been no reports of illness, yet the wholesaler ordered the recall for precautionary reasons.

<http://www.theksbwchannel.com/health/11071922/detail.html?rss=mty&psp=health>

The FDA has listed the lot SKU numbers on its website. Here is a link to that page:

[http://www.fda.gov/oc/po/firmrecalls/bj02\\_07.html](http://www.fda.gov/oc/po/firmrecalls/bj02_07.html)

The USDA plans to change the way it inspects meat and poultry plants where the danger of E. coli contamination is high. According to the *Monterey County Herald*, these are the first major changes in food inspection in over a decade. For those with better handling records and lower risks, this will mean fewer inspections. "We're just putting resources where the risk is greatest, and those plants that demonstrate excellent control will get less of our resources," said Richard Raymond, the Agriculture Department's top food safety official. "A risk-based system will be put in place to consider the type of product the plant is processing and its food safety record. "There are certain food products that carry a higher inherent risk than others," Raymond, the undersecretary for food safety, said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And there are certain plants that do a better job of controlling risk than others."

The Center for Science in the Public Interest is concerned that there is a rush to put this new program in place. "One of the concerns is that this is simply an effort to save money in a tight budget year," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, food safety director at the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "We want to make sure a budget shortfall is not what's driving these important inspection decisions." Raymond says the USDA budget is not driving the changes. "We're not going to save any money on this part of risk-based inspection," he said, adding there could be cost savings if the changes are extended later to slaughtering operations."

<http://www.montereyherald.com/mld/montereyherald/business/16732386.htm>