FoodCORE Highlights

New York City’s “Team Salmonella” Successful in Solving an Outbreak

FoodCORE
Foodborne Diseases
Centers for Outbreak
Response Enhancement

In August 2011, public health officials began an investigation into a Salmonella outbreak in which many cases resided in New York. An in-depth investigation was conducted by the New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene (NYCDOHMH), who is a partner in the FoodCORE project. With FoodCORE funding, NYCDOHMH is able to maintain a staff of trained student interviewers, aptly named “Team Salmonella.” These students helped conduct the enhanced epidemiologic investigation among the Salmonella cases in New York City.

While the investigation was a team effort, it would not have been solved without the dedication of two students in particular, who were discussing the outbreak and the results of their interviews. These students came up with the theory that chicken livers, not specifically asked on the questionnaire, might be the cause of the outbreak. Students, FoodCORE staff, and other NYCDOHMH staff visited specialty stores where cases shopped in order to learn more about the food items available, and specifically how chicken livers were being prepared.

Suspect food items were collected for testing and the outbreak strain was found in “kosher broiled chicken liver” products. As a result, the contaminated products were recalled from grocery stores on November 8, 2011 and additional illnesses were prevented.

“Without the support that “Team Salmonella” provides to help us conduct timely interviews, we would not have been able to crack this outbreak.”

–Marcelle Layton, Assistant Commissioner

For more information about FoodCORE, please visit: http://www.cdc.gov/foodcore