



CAFÉ FAVORITES
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July 16, 2009

Café Favorites products were released by FNS.

Sequence of events

On July 2, 2009 we were notified by some of our customers that our products were placed on hold by the FNS as directed by the FDA. Unfortunately, this information was not provided to us by either agency. In ideal circumstances, we prefer to communicate product disposition information directly to you. We would like to take this opportunity to outline the sequence of events over the past two weeks.

July 10, 2009 (5:15 pm Eastern): The FDA informed Café Favorites that the 10 day hold placed on our products by FNS would be allowed to expire, releasing the product into the marketplace.

July 13, 2009: FDA representatives reinitiated the hold pending a meeting with Café Favorites to discuss the results of an investigation performed by Dr. Virginia Deibel, TRAC Microbiology, Inc. Dr. Deibel is widely considered one of our country's foremost experts on Listeria.

July 15, 2009: Café Favorite products released from hold via ECOS written notification.

Café Favorites Food Safety Systems

Café Favorites takes the safety and quality of our products very seriously as evidenced by the extensive, company wide, Food Safety Systems that we have established and perform on a routine basis. These systems comprise of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP's), Prerequisite Programs and HACCP plans.

As a result of our safety programs, we have complete confidence in the safety of our sandwiches. To validate that our food safety systems are effective, Café Favorites' performs unprecedented levels of environmental and finished product testing that far exceeds industry standards and governmental guidelines.

Details of our extensive testing regime are outlined below. We trust you will agree that our Food Safety Systems have been proven effective by our test results:

- Café Favorites tested for *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) on finished products drawn hourly from each production shift on each line. From February 2 to July 2, 2009 we have tested 4,633 sandwiches all of which have tested negative for *Lm*. According to the FDA's "Guidance for Industry: Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Refrigerated or Frozen Ready-To-Eat Foods" (February, 2008) the recommendations include "periodic" sampling and testing of finished products for *Lm* or *Listeria* species. In addition, we maintain a "Test and Hold" procedure for all products tested for *Lm* or products produced when we sample product contact surfaces. No product enters the distribution chain until *Lm* testing is completed and determined negative.
- On average, Café Favorites performed 20 environmental tests for *Listeria* per day; this includes food contact and non-food contact surfaces. The FDA guidelines recommends sampling 5 food contact surfaces weekly and 5 non-food contact surfaces every other week. From February 2, 2009 to present we have conducted over 2,600 environmental tests for *Lm*; 90 – 95% of which are food contact surfaces, all have been negative for *Lm*.
- From February to June, 2009, the FDA and Minnesota Department of Agriculture analyzed hundreds of environmental sponges and finished products for *Lm*. All products and food contact surfaces have tested negative.
- Café Favorites initiates the Food Safety Programs by top down leadership. All management personnel are charged with embracing food safety practices. The employees are trained and dedicated to controlling *Listeria* by following our food safety system procedures. They understand that their job is dependent upon compliance. An example of one program is our robust sanitation practices, which includes mid-shift clean-ups after every 4 hours of production, baking equipment in an on-site cook-house and steaming food-contact surfaces.
- According to the scientific literature, *Listeria* spp. is widespread in nature and found in soil, water, humans, animals and raw agricultural products. As such, it is understood that we must maintain strict cross-contamination procedures. Café Favorites philosophy is a "seek and destroy" mission. As our testing regime attests, we actively seek out *Lm* should it gain access to our plant environment. Through our corrective and preventative action steps, should we find *Lm*, we implement investigations to remedy the contamination and prevent future occurrences.

Food Safety and Microbiological Investigation:

The week of July 8, 2009 we hired Dr. Virginia Deibel, of TRAC Microbiology (Madison, WI) as a consultant to assess our plant and to perform a microbiological investigation for *Lm* harborage points. Dr. Deibel has a Ph.D. in Food Microbiology and a minor in Bacteriology. She has worked in microbiological laboratories for the past 16 years and performs harborage point investigations. During Dr. Deibel's visit and investigation, she took 156 environmental sponges and tested for *Lm*.

Out of 156 sample sites, 3 were found to be positive for *Lm*. Two were within the drains and one was on a door. All positive samples were well removed from food contact surfaces. It is her microbiological opinion that the drainage system harbored *Lm* via biofilm formation on drain pipes and due to inactivity of some drains connected to the drainage system.

In order to remove *Lm*., eliminate the biofilm and reduce likelihood of further harborages, we employed the use of a drain cleaning apparatus and procedure utilizing EPA approved drain cleaning chemicals for the elimination of biofilms along with replacement of the implicated door. Further, a routine drain cleaning maintenance procedure is established to maintain control over the drain system. The chemical system and revised drain cleaning procedures have been tested for efficacy and all results have been negative for *Lm*.

Based on our test results, we have full confidence our procedures have been effective in the elimination of *Lm* found in the drains. According to the evidence collected, it was Dr. Deibel's microbiological opinion, as stated to the FDA, that the products are safe for consumption.

We will be scheduling a series of conference calls to personally discuss any questions that you have. The dates and times will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

Len Kretchman
President