

Blue Bell Creameries issues recall of all products

April 21 2015



In this April 10, 2015, file photo, Blue Bell ice cream rests on a grocery store shelf in Lawrence, Kan. Texas-based Blue Bell Creameries issued a voluntary recall Monday, April 20, 2015, for all of its products on the market after two samples of chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream tested positive for listeriosis. (AP Photo/Orlin Wagner, File)

Texas-based Blue Bell Creameries issued a voluntary recall Monday night for all of its products on the market after two samples of chocolate

chip cookie dough ice cream tested positive for listeria, a potentially deadly bacteria.

The company "cannot say with certainty" how the bacteria was introduced to its facilities, Blue Bell's chief executive Paul Kruse said in a statement. Blue Bell issued the recall that includes [ice cream](#), frozen yogurt, sherbet and frozen snacks distributed in 23 states and international locations because other products "have the potential to be contaminated," according to the statement.

"We're committed to doing the 100 percent right thing, and the best way to do that is to take all of our products off the market until we can be confident that they are all safe," Kruse said.

The first recall in the family-owned creamery's 108-year history was issued last month after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention linked ice cream contaminated with listeria to three deaths at a Kansas hospital. Five others in Kansas and Texas were sickened with listeriosis, which can cause fever, muscle aches, gastrointestinal symptoms.

The illness was tracked to a production line in Brenham, Texas, and later to a second line in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. The most recently contaminated samples were discovered through a testing program the company initiated after its first recall, according to the statement.

Monday's [recall](#) extends to retail outlets in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wyoming and international locations.

The manufacturing facility in Oklahoma where operations were

suspended earlier this month for sanitizing will remain closed as Blue Bell continues to investigate the source of the bacteria, the statement said.

Blue Bell is implementing a process to test all of its [products](#) before releasing them to the market, with plans to resume limited distribution soon.

The company said it is also expanding its cleaning and sanitization system, beefing up its employee training, expanding its swabbing system by 800 percent to include more surfaces and is sending daily samples to a microbiology laboratory for testing.

Listeria primarily affects pregnant women and their newborns, older adults and people with immune systems weakened by cancer, cancer treatments, or other serious conditions.

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