

## Salmonella Outbreak Again Tied to Ohio Hatchery

CDC: Illnesses Reported in 23 States; 18 Hospitalized

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May 31, 2012 -- Live chicks and ducklings from an Ohio mail-order hatchery have been linked to salmonella poisoning in 93 people in 23 states, according to the CDC.

The agency has joined state and federal health and agriculture officials in the investigation of the salmonella outbreak. So far, 18 people have been hospitalized, and one person may have died, as a result of the outbreak. More than a third of those reported ill are children ages 10 and under.

Illnesses have occurred from Maine down to South Carolina and as far west as Texas. The first case was reported on March 1.

### Not the First Outbreak Tied to Live Poultry

The live chicks and ducklings, which were purchased to be used for meat or eggs or to be kept as pets, all came from the same hatchery. This is not the first time that that hatchery, Mount Healthy Hatcheries in Mount Healthy, Ohio, has sent infected animals to its customers.

Last October, the CDC reported that a multi-state outbreak totaling 96 cases of salmonella poisoning could be traced to the hatchery. In that outbreak, which began in February 2011, health officials identified two distinct strains of salmonella; the current outbreak has been tied to three strains.

A study led by CDC researchers and published today in the *New England Journal of Medicine* identified over 300 cases of salmonella caused by live poultry. Most of those taken ill over the eight-year study period were young children. More than 80% of those cases were traced back to a single source based in the Western U.S.

### Safe Handling Tips

According to the CDC, live chickens and other poultry can look healthy but still be carriers of salmonella. For anyone who keeps them for meat, eggs, or as pets, the agency advises the following:

Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after touching them or coming into contact with anything in the area where they're kept.

Keep them out of the house, and keep their cages, water, and feeding equipment clean.

Children under 5, the elderly, and anyone with a weak immune system should not handle or touch live poultry.

Do not snuggle or kiss live poultry. When around them, do not touch your mouth and do not eat or drink.