

Q4 Newsletter

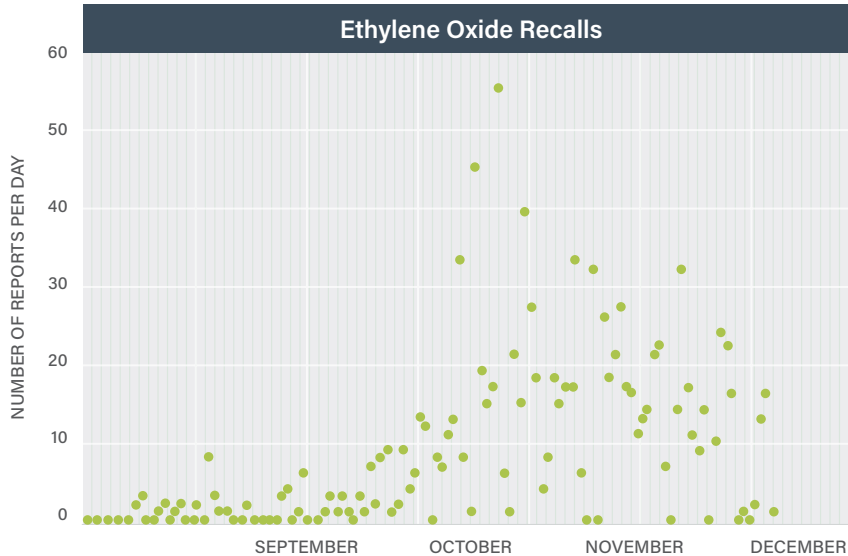
JANUARY 2021



Recall Recap

In Q4, there were:

1863 food-related alerts reported	63 Class I recalls 29 Class II recalls 4 Class III recalls	~60% related to Ethylene Oxide levels in sesame products
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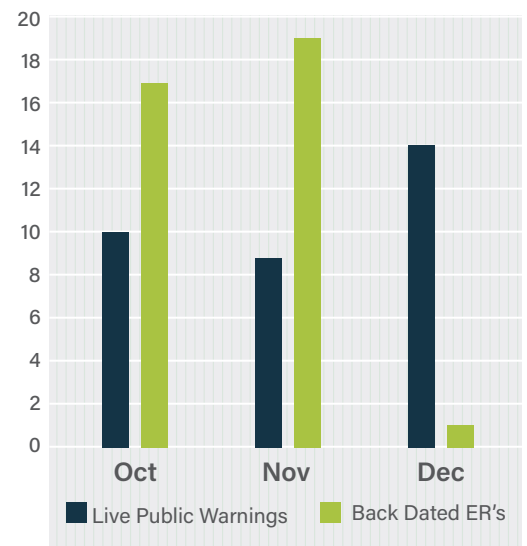
Data Spotlight:

Enforcement Reports – New Addition to the FoodTrack Database!

Since 1996, FoodTrack has reported on real-time recalls, all of which are simultaneously sent to subscribers and — as of 2021 — stored in our proprietary database (over 30,000 reports covering 12 years). In an effort to maintain this accurate and comprehensive database, we now include back-dated FDA recalls as they are published to the FDA's Enforcement Report in addition to all standard real-time recalls.

FDA Enforcement Reports track regulatory activity in connection with recalled products. While they are updated on a weekly basis by the agency, recalls are not always published as public warnings (posted in real-time or as a press release to the media), per the FDA's discretion; "All recalls monitored by FDA are included in the Enforcement Report once they are classified and may be listed prior to classification when FDA determines the firm's removal or correction of a marketed product(s) meets the definition of a recall. Once FDA completes the hazard assessment, the Enforcement Report entry will be updated with the recall classification" (FDA).

In Q4, there were 96 recalls initiated by the FDA; 33 of those were issues as public warning (and consequently published live via our FoodTrack Alerts service), and 37 were included as part of the agency's weekly Enforcement Reports (not published live on their pages, but monitored by our editorial team and added to our database).

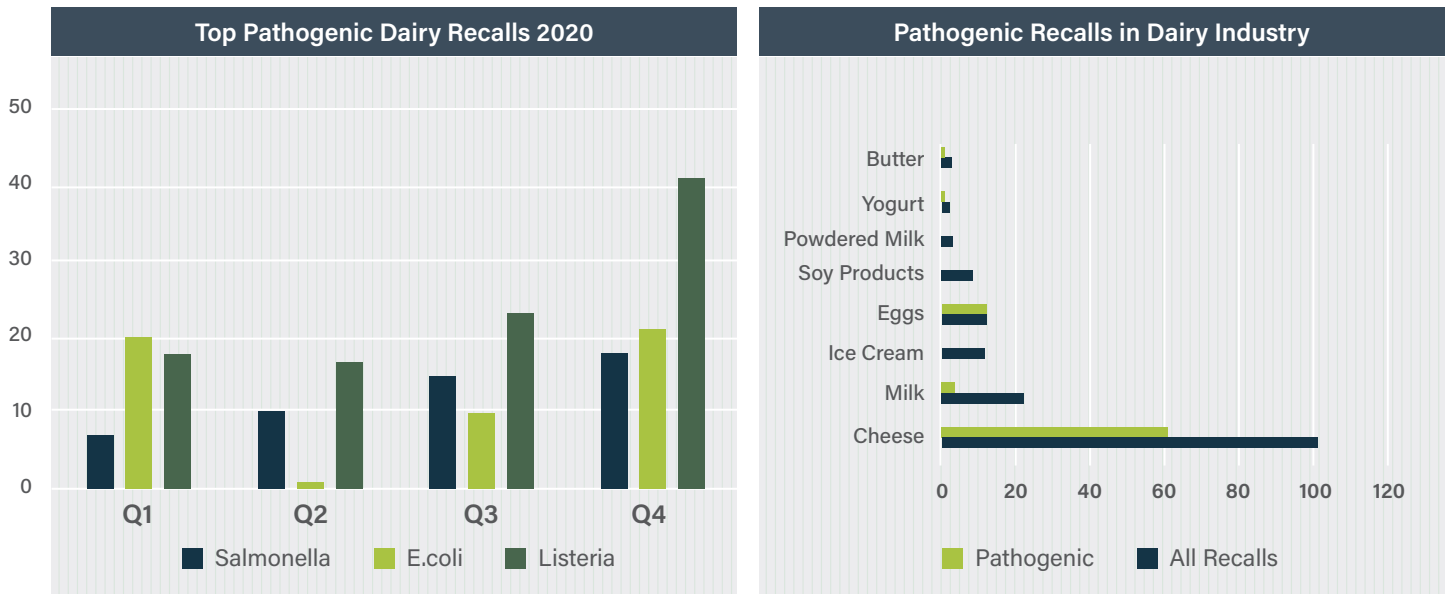


**Enforcement Reports numbers for December will inevitably go up as new weekly ERs are issued — these numbers are not static, and we work to keep them as up-to-date as possible*

Global Pathogenic Recalls in the Dairy Sector

There were an average of 17 pathogenic recalls per quarter worldwide in the dairy sector over the last five years. In Q4 2020 alone, there were 62 Listeria and E.coli recalls in Europe, 75% of which were connected to soft cheeses. One event impacted over a dozen European countries, with products distributed at both the restaurant and retail levels as well as distribution centers.

Consumption of contaminated soft cheeses continues to be a common cause of listeriosis outbreaks. Dairy products are consistently the leading source of pathogenic outbreaks, with cheese in particular providing an ideal environment for the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*. Although pasteurization of milk kills Listeria, products made from pasteurized milk can still become contaminated if they are produced in facilities with unsanitary conditions. According to a joint FDA-Health Canada Report produced by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), "For soft-ripened cheeses, the risk for listeriosis per serving is estimated to be 50- to 160-fold greater for cheese made from unpasteurized milk than pasteurized milk".¹



Listeria can affect at-risk populations disproportionately and has a mortality rate of 20-30%. Food safety regulations can help to prevent contamination and the persistence of pathogens in dairy processing plants. While control of this pathogen in particular remains a challenge, observance of pasteurization measures can reduce future outbreaks. In addition to sanitation protocols, proper and descriptive labeling has been shown to effectively reduce consumption of unpasteurized dairy products that are more likely to be at risk for listeriosis.

¹ Jackson KA, Gould LH, Hunter JC, Kucerova Z, Jackson B. Listeriosis Outbreaks Associated with Soft Cheeses, United States, 1998-2014.

If you have any inquiries about this report or if you are not already subscribing to our COVID-19 Weekly Round-up, please email amelesius@foodtrack.net.