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**Date:** May 31, 2013

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**INCREASE IN HEPATITIS A INFECTIONS POSSIBLY ASSOCIATED WITH COSTCO**

**CDPH Warns Not To Eat Townsend Farms  
Organic Antioxidant Blend Frozen Berries**

*Product Has Possible Link to Hepatitis A*

Riverside County health officials are joining state and federal authorities in urging residents not to eat Townsend Farms Organic Antioxidant Blend of frozen berries sold through Costco stores as they may be linked to a multistate outbreak of hepatitis A infections.

To date, at least 30 cases are being investigated nationwide. In California, six confirmed illnesses in persons who consumed this product have been reported from Humboldt, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino (2), and San Diego counties. Three of these individuals have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported. The Riverside County case is a 53 year old female who is doing well at home.

“People who have bought this product should discard it if still found in their home,” said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Public Health Officer for Riverside County. “Anyone who has consumed this specific product in the last 14 days should contact their doctor to discuss possible hepatitis A prevention and treatment options.”

Costco has removed this product from stores and is notifying their member customers who have bought this product. CDPH will continue to work with the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [Food and Drug Administration](#) on this outbreak.

Symptoms of hepatitis A virus infection include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, clay-colored bowel movements, joint pain and jaundice (a yellowing of the skin or eyes). Symptoms develop two to six weeks after consuming contaminated food or drink and can last from one week to several months.

Most people recover completely, but sometimes hepatitis A can lead to hospitalization and severe illness. It is very important that if you have symptoms like this you do not go to work, especially if you work in food service, health care or child care. For more information, please see the California Department of Public Health Fact sheet.

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/CDCHEpAGeneralFactSheet.pdf>

People who develop symptoms of hepatitis should consult their health care provider. For more information on hepatitis A, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Outbreaks/2013/A1b-03-31/advice-consumers.html>