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For Immediate Release:Contact: Deborah Busemeyer, DOH Communications Director
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Department of Health Continues to Report Rise in Salmonella Patients**

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Health and Environment departments remind people and retailers to limit their consumption of tomatoes to the list of safe producers on U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s website. There are now 77 patients in 17 counties of New Mexico. People have reported becoming ill between May 11 and June 8.

Look up <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.html> for the list of safe tomato producers. The FDA recently added New Mexico to that list.

“We are concerned that people or retailers may still have contaminated tomatoes on their shelves or in refrigerators,” said state Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “The FDA list of safe producers includes New Mexico, but contaminated tomatoes from other locations could still be in the state.”

The FDA has stated that the contaminated tomatoes were grown in certain areas of Florida or Mexico, but the agency has not been able to pinpoint a more specific source yet. Tomatoes from Baja California Norte in Mexico and certain counties in Florida are on the FDA safe list, but tomatoes from other parts of Mexico and Florida have not been cleared and should not be consumed at this time.

Both the Health Department and Environment Department are receiving calls from people who have become ill with gastrointestinal illnesses possibly linked to the contaminated tomatoes. The Environment Department has followed up on calls by contacting the suspect food establishment

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and making sure they are aware of the outbreak. The Environment Department is also verifying that those establishments understand they should only serve tomatoes from the FDA's list of safe sources.

New Mexicans who think they are ill with symptoms of Salmonella should contact their physician for follow up and potential testing. Symptoms include fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramping. People can save their tomatoes in their refrigerator. The State will contact sick patients about having their tomatoes tested.

Residents can also report their illness to the Environment Department at (505) 476-8600. The Department will investigate links between the illness and suspect food establishments.

The Department of Health is updating patient information daily on its website. For the latest information, look up www.nmhealth.org. The last patient to report becoming sick was a 63-year-old man from Rio Arriba County who told the Department of Health that he ate salsa with an unknown type of tomatoes. Other recent patients have reported eating large red, round tomatoes.

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