

California Food Emergency Response Team CalFERT

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CalFERT

- Team is mobilized after a suspect food item is identified
- Environmental investigation may include:
 - point of service
 - manufacturer
 - farm
- Traceback/traceforward of the food vehicle to manufacturer and/or farm
- Environmental sampling
- Product sampling (raw/finished)
- Laboratory analyses
- Collection and examination of records
- Root cause analysis



Investigative Team

- California Food Emergency Response Team
- Partnership between CDPH and FDA
- Interdisciplinary group of experienced investigators and scientists.
- Conducts foodborne illness outbreak investigations.
- Top priority is to take the necessary steps to stop the outbreak.







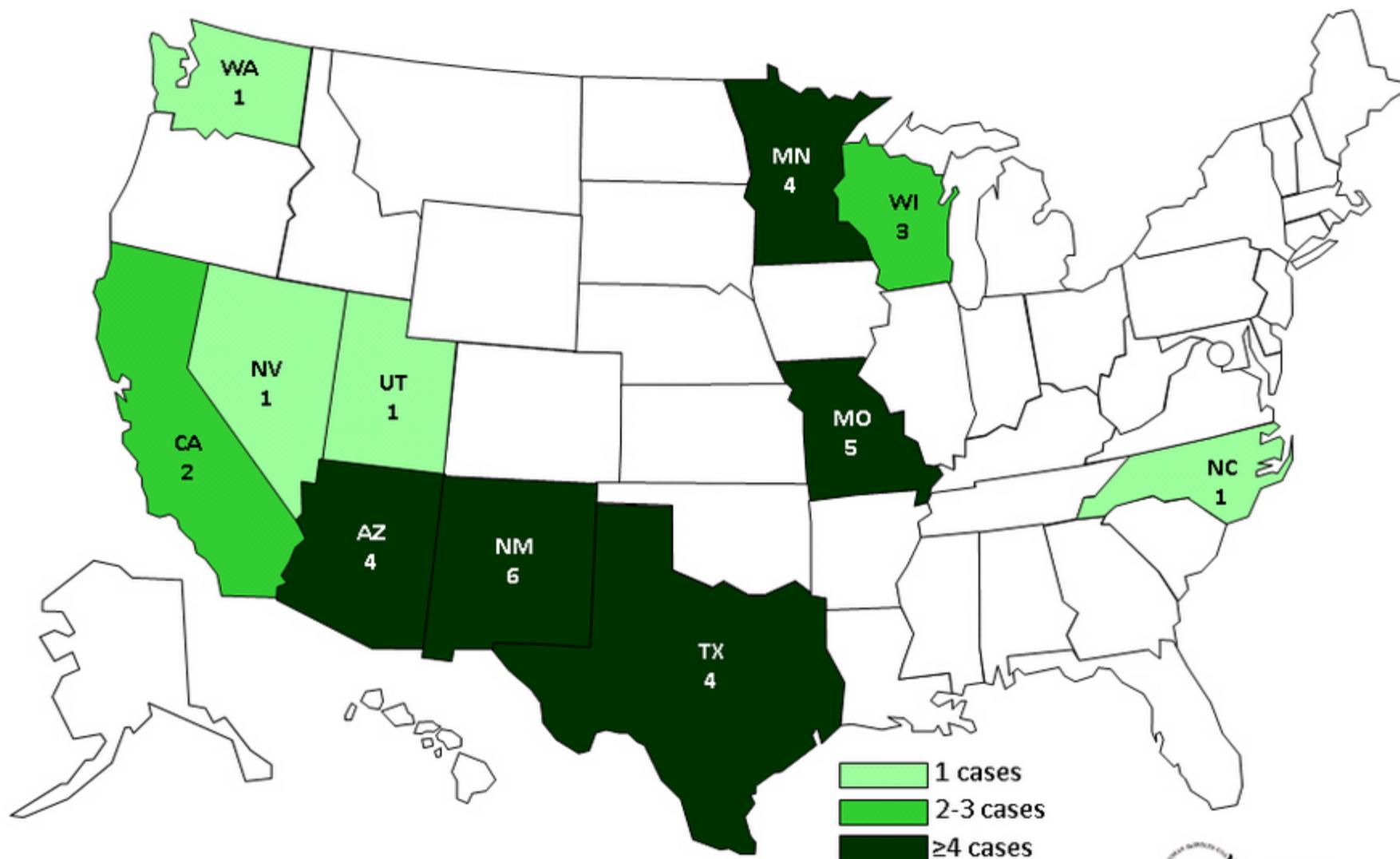


December 2014 - *Listeria monocytogenes* Caramel Apples

- 32 cases in 11 states (3 confirmed in CA)
- 31 cases hospitalized
- 7 deaths
- Commercially produced, pre-packaged caramel apples



Persons infected with the outbreak strains of *Listeria monocytogenes*, by state of residence, as of December 30, 2014 (n=32)



Listeria monocytogenes – Caramel Apples

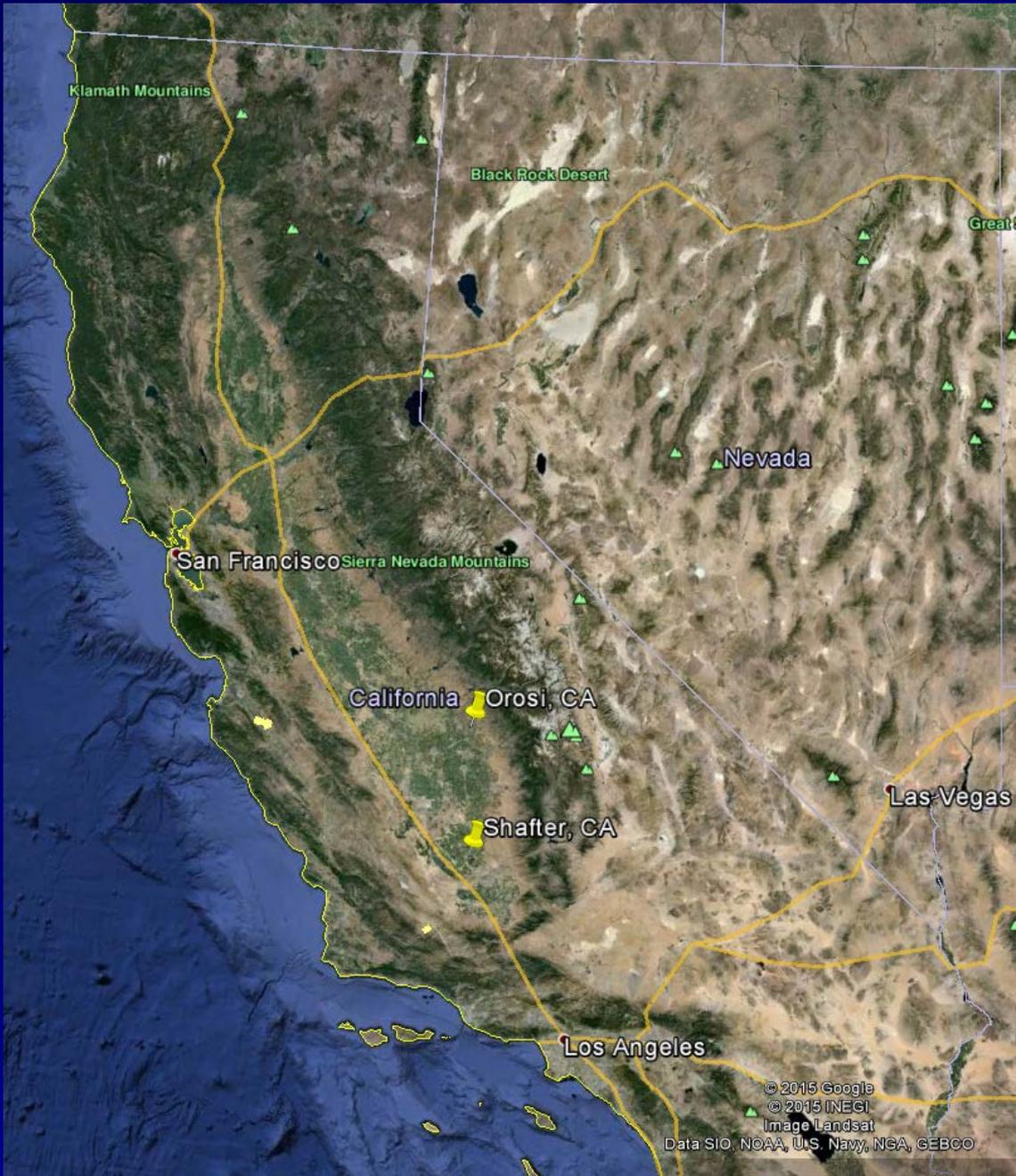
- CalFERT monitoring outbreak for a few weeks without a food item of interest
- Caramel apples identified as food item of interest in mid-December
- December 19, 2014 CalFERT activated under ICS



Listeria monocytogenes – Caramel Apples

- Caramel apple sample collected from California case patient in Felton, CA
- Environmental investigations at Happy Apples and Bidart Bros. initiated on the same day
- Teams composed of both CDPH and FDA were at both locations





Listeria monocytogenes – Caramel Apples

- Hundreds of samples collected:
 - Environmental swabs
 - Ingredients
 - Plastic clam shell packaging
 - Wooden sticks







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Listeria monocytogenes – Caramel Apples

- Additional environmental investigation conducted at California Snack Foods in South El Monte, CA
- Manufactured caramel apples using apples from Bidart Bros.
- Samples of caramel apples collected



Environmental Investigations - Results

- Bidart Bros. – 7 environmental swabs matched one of the outbreak strains
- Happy Apples – 1 environmental swab matched one of the outbreak strains
- Caramel apple sample from case in Felton, CA tested negative for *Listeria monocytogenes*
- CA Snack Foods – 1 caramel apple tested positive for *Listeria monocytogenes* but did not match the outbreak strains



Recalls

- Bidart Bros.
- Happy Apples
- CA Snack Foods



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 25, 2014
PH14-097

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**CDPH Warns Consumers Not to Eat Happy Apple Brand Caramel Apples
Due to Possible Contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes***

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director Dr. Ron Chapman warned consumers today not to eat all varieties of Happy Apple Brand Caramel Apples because they may be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*. CDPH is coordinating with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other state and local agencies in the investigation of 29 cases of Listeriosis in 10 states which appear to be linked to the consumption of multiple brands of caramel apples. All 29 cases have been hospitalized and five deaths have been reported. A single case-patient in California has died.

Conclusions

- CalFERT results in a significant increase in communication
 - Coordinated response - CDPH and FDA
 - Lack of duplication
 - Shared information including epidemiology
 - Quicker access to data when investigating multi-state outbreaks
 - Better use of resources

