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Microbial Pathogens

# ***Listeria***

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**Utah Department of Agriculture and Food**

- Leading cause of death from foodborne illness.
  - Can survive in temperatures less than freezing and can live in moist areas including soil, vegetation, and food processing facilities.
  - Outbreaks have been traced to unpasteurized milk, seafood, deli meats, soft cheeses, and fresh produce
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- Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, aches, and some infections can result in nervous system damage.
  - Contamination can come from workers, food contact surfaces, air, and raw foods.
  - Outbreaks led to recalls of frozen vegetables, cheeses, salads, and apples in recent years. A sprout producer was closed because of *Listeria* contamination

Prevention of spread:

- Wash hands before touching and harvesting produce.
- Maintain and clean equipment and harvest bins, bags, or boxes.
- Avoid touching areas where condensation or water is dripping in a facility.
- Keep produce away from damp areas.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize food contact surfaces.