Listeria outbreak in plant-based milk

You think raw milk is dangerous? Watch this. A third person from Ontario has died in a Listeria outbreak connected to recalled plant-based milk. The contaminated products include Silk brand and Great Value brand.

So this whole situation of the Lesteria cases that are linked to plant based milks is just terrible. And it seems to be traced back to a Danone production facility.

There was likely some contamination somewhere along the production line and it ended up in the product. and that should not happen. But let's be clear, this is not comparable to what we see with dairy.

With dairy products, the animals can harbor harmful pathogens even if they're apparently healthy.

Critique of raw milk risk statistics

But again, I want to emphasize that the very fact that these pathogens got into these products is just unacceptable. According to the Journal of Epidemiology and Global Health, from 2005 to 2020, 117 people contracted salmonella from raw milk, while 6,000 did from leafy greens.

If you're concerned about raw dairy, you might want to be concerned consuming fruits, vegetables, peanut butter, and pasteurized dairy. These are the top foods that carried fatal food-borne illnesses.

Let's start with the way they presented these stats because it was very dishonest. They only provided the stats for salmonella and ignored the other pathogens.

For example, in the very same paper, raw milk was responsible for over 1,400 cases of Campylobacter versus only 177 cases from vegetables. But there are more issues with citing these stats.

Why raw milk is riskier than pasteurized milk

For one, very few people consume raw milk today. And prior to pasteurization, which is the heating of these products to kill off pathogens, milk was responsible for about 25% of all food and waterborne illnesses.

But after pasteuroization that dropped to 1%. Also, if we look at states where it's legal to sell raw, they have over three times the number of outbreaks as states were it prohibited.

So even if pasteurized milk is responsible for more cases overall, that doesn't mean that raw milk was safer. Let me illustrate. Lets just say a million people were consuming pasteureized and a hundred of them got sick.

Then lets say ten people consumed raw, but five of the got. Yes, more people who consumed pasteuroized got, sick but it was only 0.01% of people consuming.

But with raw milk, it was 5 out of 10 or 50%. Now those numbers weren't pulled from the literature, but it illustrates the point.

How produce gets contaminated

And when we actually look at a proper analysis that considers how frequent or infrequent raw-milk consumption is, your risk of infection from raw, milk is about 150 times that of pasteurized milk.

And finally, fruits and vegetables don't inherently contain these pathogens, but they can become contaminated. And one of the primary ways they come in contact with these pathogen is through animal feces contaminating

things like irrigation water.

In fact, being grown closer to animal agriculture is actually a risk factor for contamination. So the irony here is that when we hear about E. coli infections from lettuce, it very well may have been due to animals agriculture.