



FOOD SAFETY AT FESTIVALS AND FAIRS



INSPECTORS ENSURE FOOD SAFETY FOR FAIR PATRONS IN WISCONSIN

Marathon, WI -- County sanitarians have inspected and licensed many of the nearly 40 food vendors at this week's 140th Wisconsin Valley Fair. Doing so helps ensure vendors store and prepare foods at appropriate temperatures to keep people from becoming ill, said Jackie Bethel, a Marathon County environmental health sanitarian.

Longtime vendors "**know what they need to do**" and comply with requirements, Bethel said. In some cases, however, the health workers detect equipment problems before vendors do.

Earl Wondrash, who has been working at the stand for 10 years with the club appreciates the sanitarians' suggestions.

"**We don't want anyone to get sick, either,**" Wondrash said.

2007 TASTE OF CHICAGO OUTBREAK

Despite the focus on vendors by sanitarians, outbreaks linked to festivals still happen. During July 2007 over 600 visitors to the annual food festival, Taste of Chicago, fell ill with *Salmonella* linked to a hummus dish sold by Chicago restaurant, Pars Cove.

Anthony Bruno and 11 others filed the suits against Iran Echo, ZB Importing Inc and the City of Chicago after eating the contaminated hummus.

The suit says that Iran Echo was responsible for preparing, storing, handling, serving and selling the food at the Pars Cove booth. The suit claims Iran Echo failed to use safe and proper food preparation, storage and food handling practices.

What happens when the inspectors aren't there is more important than what is seen when they are.

What you can do

Festivals and fairs provide great food experiences but because they are temporary sites, food preparation, storage and transport can be problematic.

Steps to fair and festival food safety:

- Cooking and storing food at proper temperatures.
- Controlling cross-contamination.
- Practicing good personal hygiene.
- Acquiring food from safe sources.

