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# ***NAMA NEWS***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 1, 2017**

## **North American Millers' Association Statement on E. coli in Wheat Flour**

Food safety is a core value for the milling industry and the entire wheat sector, including growers, processors, manufacturers, grocery retailers and restaurants.

Over the last 24 months, the presence of potentially harmful E. coli bacteria has been detected in raw wheat flour in the United States and Canada, resulting in consumer illnesses and the recall of flour and products made with this flour.

Food safety experts from across the industry are working with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to determine the source of the contamination, and reduce the risk to consumers.

An extensive investigation by industry and government food safety experts, including DNA analysis performed by the FDA, has determined wheat exposure to animal sources during growing or harvesting as the most likely source of the contamination. Flour is made from wheat grown and harvested in nature, and as such, it is possible for wheat to be exposed to environmental sources of E. coli.

Raw flour is not ready-to-eat and consumers should not eat or taste raw flour, dough or batter prior to cooking or baking as they can cause illness if harmful bacteria are present. However, it is important for consumers to know that proper cooking and baking eliminates the food safety risk associated with E. coli in raw wheat flour, dough and batter.

Because the milling industry cares deeply about the safety of its products and the consumers who use them, NAMA recently launched a campaign to educate industry officials, food safety experts and consumers on proper food safety and handling instructions for flour, dough and batter. To kick-off the campaign, NAMA distributed [a simple and easy to use educational video](#) in September on proper handling and baking instructions for flour, dough and batter.

We invest our resources and reputations in providing consumers with safe, nutritious and affordable products, and we are committed to open communication with all stakeholders.



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NAMA and its members are deeply concerned about the individuals and families affected by this situation and will continue to work diligently with food safety, public health and company officials to mitigate the problem. In the meantime, consumers can purchase and use retail flour products that have not been recalled, and should take care to use flour consistent with manufacturer and FDA instructions:

“Consumers are reminded to not consume any raw products made with flour. Flour is an ingredient that comes from milling wheat, something grown outdoors that carries with it risks of bacteria which are rendered harmless by baking, frying or boiling. Consumers are reminded to wash their hands, work surfaces, and utensils thoroughly after contact with raw dough products or flour, and to never eat raw dough or batter.” [Source](#)

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*NAMA is the trade association of the wheat, corn, oat, and rye milling industries. Member companies operate mills in 38 states, Canada and Puerto Rico, representing more than 90 percent of total industry production capacity.*