

Hawai'i Kine

Eat Local, Eat Fresh, Eat Safer



Properly cleaned, fresh, local fruits and vegetables are good for you!

The tropical paradise of Hawai'i does have food-related diseases you should be aware of. While cooked, dried or frozen foods are of less concern, here are some tips for safer buying, cleaning and storing fresh produce eaten raw:

- Remember to routinely wash your reusable bags.
- Always Check and Clean fruits and vegetables before eating them.
- Dispose of produce with visible bite marks, or slime trails or other evidence of contamination.
- Thoroughly clean all produce with potable (drinkable) running water.
- Do not use unfiltered, untreated catchment water to clean produce.
- Leafy greens must be washed leaf by leaf with light rubbing or scrubbing.
- Let fruits and vegetables dry before properly storing.

Rat Lungworm Disease (*Angiostrongylus cantonensis*)



Rat lungworm disease is caused by microscopic worms that reproduce in rats and develop in slugs and snails. People can become infected if slugs, snails and flatworms are hidden in unwashed, uncooked or unfrozen fruits or vegetables. Initial symptoms can be flu-like and start with a headache, most often severe. There may be fever, joint pain, fatigue, nausea and often the skin feels itchy and tingly and may become sensitive. Severe symptoms include inflammation of the brain and spinal cord, which may lead to paralysis, coma and death. The type and severity of symptoms determines the course of treatment by your physician.

Other common foodborne diseases:

Diarrhea (*Escherichia coli*) Symptoms can include nausea or vomiting, abdominal cramps, watery or bloody diarrhea, fatigue and fever.

Salmonellosis (*Salmonella enteritidis*) Many people experience symptoms 12-72 hours after exposure. Symptoms include diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps and can last 4-7 days.

Listeriosis (*Listeria monocytogenes*) Pregnant women may have flu-like symptoms and fever, but can cause miscarriage, still birth, premature delivery or life threatening infection of the newborn. Other people may experience headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and muscle aches.



This brochure was produced by the Hawai'i Island Rat Lungworm Working Group, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawai'i at Hilo, and sponsored by the Anderson-Beck Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation. For more information about rat lungworm disease please visit our website: pharmacy.uhh.hawaii.edu/rlw/