



The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) represents more than 7,000 governmental, private, academic, and uniformed services sector environmental health professionals in the U.S., its territories, and internationally. NEHA is the profession’s strongest advocate for excellence in the practice of environmental health as it delivers on its mission to build, sustain, and empower an effective environmental health workforce.

## Policy Statement on Raw Milk

Adopted: October 2020

Policy Sunset: October 2023

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) recognizes the nutritional value of milk, as well as the scientific evidence that raw milk can transmit pathogenic bacteria to the consumer. NEHA further recognizes the scientific and public health evidence that pasteurization of milk is

### NEHA’s Policy Statement

NEHA specifically recommends the following:

- x Legislation that requires pasteurization of all milk prior to sale or distribution to the final consumer, regardless of if a fee is charged.
- x Prevent arrangements such as cow shares, herd sharing, bartering, exchange, or any other action that would allow the consumer to obtain a portion of the production of raw, unpasteurized milk from a cow, sheep, or goat.
- x The adoption of current best practices in food safety by state, local, tribal, territorial, and acknowledges the importance of milk as a source of nutrition and is concerned about the safety of based, preventive public health measures. surpasses milk as a single source of obtaining essential nutrients needed for optimal health

across all life stages. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010) Raw milk is a rich food that provides essential nutrients such as protein, calcium, phosphorus, and vitamins A, D, B12, rib



agencies in Virginia reported that 14 people became ill after consuming raw milk from a herd share program. The vast majority of people that became ill were children. Of the cases, four *E. coli* O157:H7 and three developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (Ferrell, 2017).

- x August 2016: State and local public health officials and agriculture agencies in Michigan reported that four people became ill with *E. coli* O157:H7 after consuming raw milk from a herd share program. As a result, two individuals were hospitalized. (CDC, 2016b).
- x August 2016: Local and public health officials in Colorado reported that 17 people became ill after consuming raw milk from a herd share program. A total of 14 individuals were confirmed to have had *Campylobacter jejuni*. Two milk samples obtained from the herd share program and from an ill shareholder yielded positive results for the outbreak strain (CDC, 2016c).
- x December 2016: Washington health and agriculture agencies reported that three people became ill with *Salmonella* after consuming raw milk from a retail store. All three individuals were hospitalized (CDC, 2016d).
- x 2016–2018: CDC’s National Outbreak Reporting System database identified 12 outbreaks of foodborne illness from 2016–2018 that implicated raw milk. The database also notes that between 2016–2018, these outbreaks accounted for 129 illnesses and 21 hospitalizations (CDC, 2018).
- x May 2018: State and local public health officials in Tennessee reported that 17 people became ill with *E. coli* O157:H7 after consuming raw milk from a farm share program. From the investigation, 10 confirmed cases and 7 probable cases of *E. coli* were identified. Of the 10 cases, 7 people were hospitalized and 6 people were diagnosed with hemolytic uremic syndrome (Knox County Health Department, 2019).
- x September 2018: The Washington Department of Health issued an alert informing consumers of a *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak linked to the consumption of raw milk from a licensed creamery. Laboratory results concluded that one child <5 years and one person in their 70s got ill (Washington State Department of Health, 2018).

Moreover, the occurrence of





[http://outbreakdatabase.com/reports/TN18\\_055\\_Raw\\_Milk\\_Report\\_Final\\_Jan\\_22\\_2019.pdf](http://outbreakdatabase.com/reports/TN18_055_Raw_Milk_Report_Final_Jan_22_2019.pdf)

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