

FDA CORE 101

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June 8, 2026



Foodborne Outbreak Response related to FDA Regulated Products



State and Local Partners



State/local/Tribal/Territorial health & agriculture departments and laboratories

Epidemiologic investigation

Collect food histories and sampling

Facility and farm investigations & product/regulatory actions



Disease Surveillance

Outbreak detection

Food history analysis

Epidemiologic investigation and communications



Investigations and Inspections

Food and environmental testing

Product traceback and product recalls

Regulatory actions and Communications

Multiple lines of evidence are used to solve outbreaks

FDA

- Laboratory
 - Is the same bacteria in food or the environment?
- Epidemiologic
 - What are people eating?
- Traceback
 - Is there a common source?



Weighing the evidence holistically helps build a complete picture of the outbreak and identify the most likely source of contamination.

CORE 101



- **Signals and Surveillance**
Detect



- **Response**
Stop

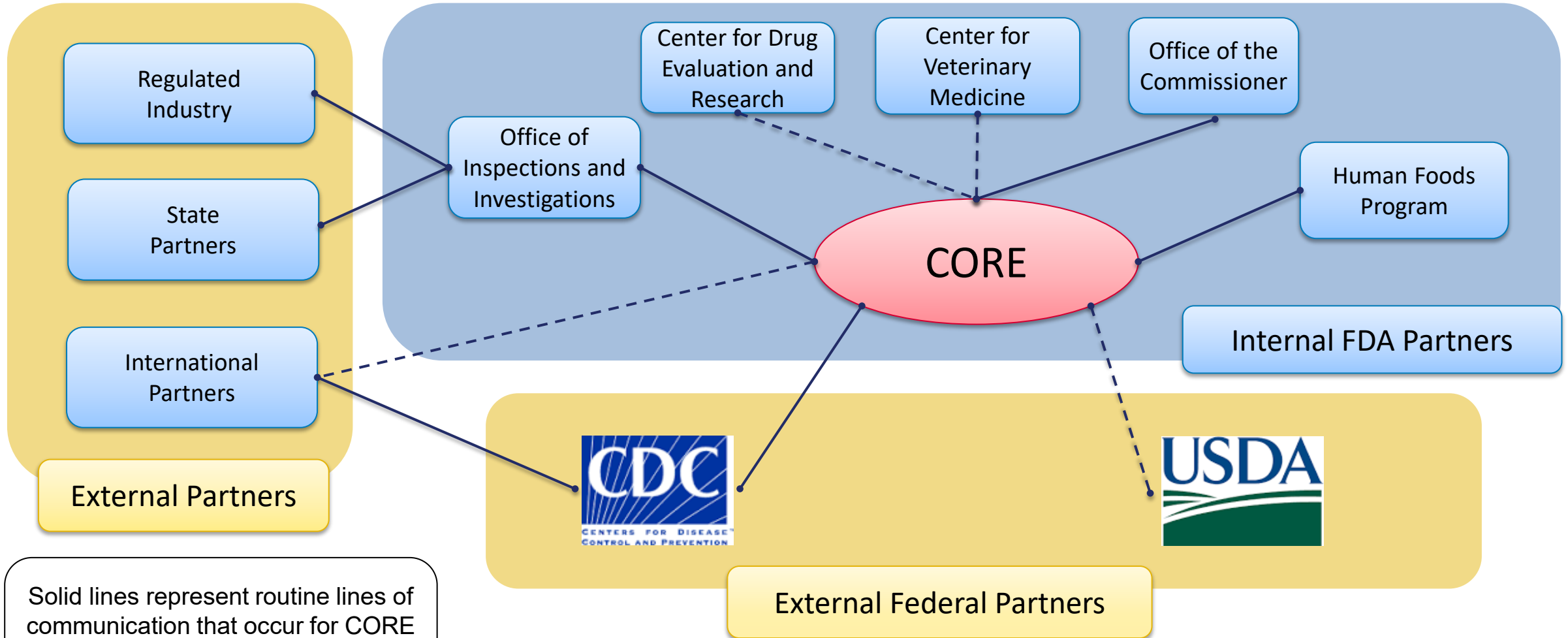


- **Communications**
Inform

- **Outbreak Evaluation & Outbreak Analytics**
Collect, Trend, and Predict



CORE Network



Solid lines represent routine lines of communication that occur for CORE outbreaks; dotted lines are established for specific situations.

<https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/about-core-network>

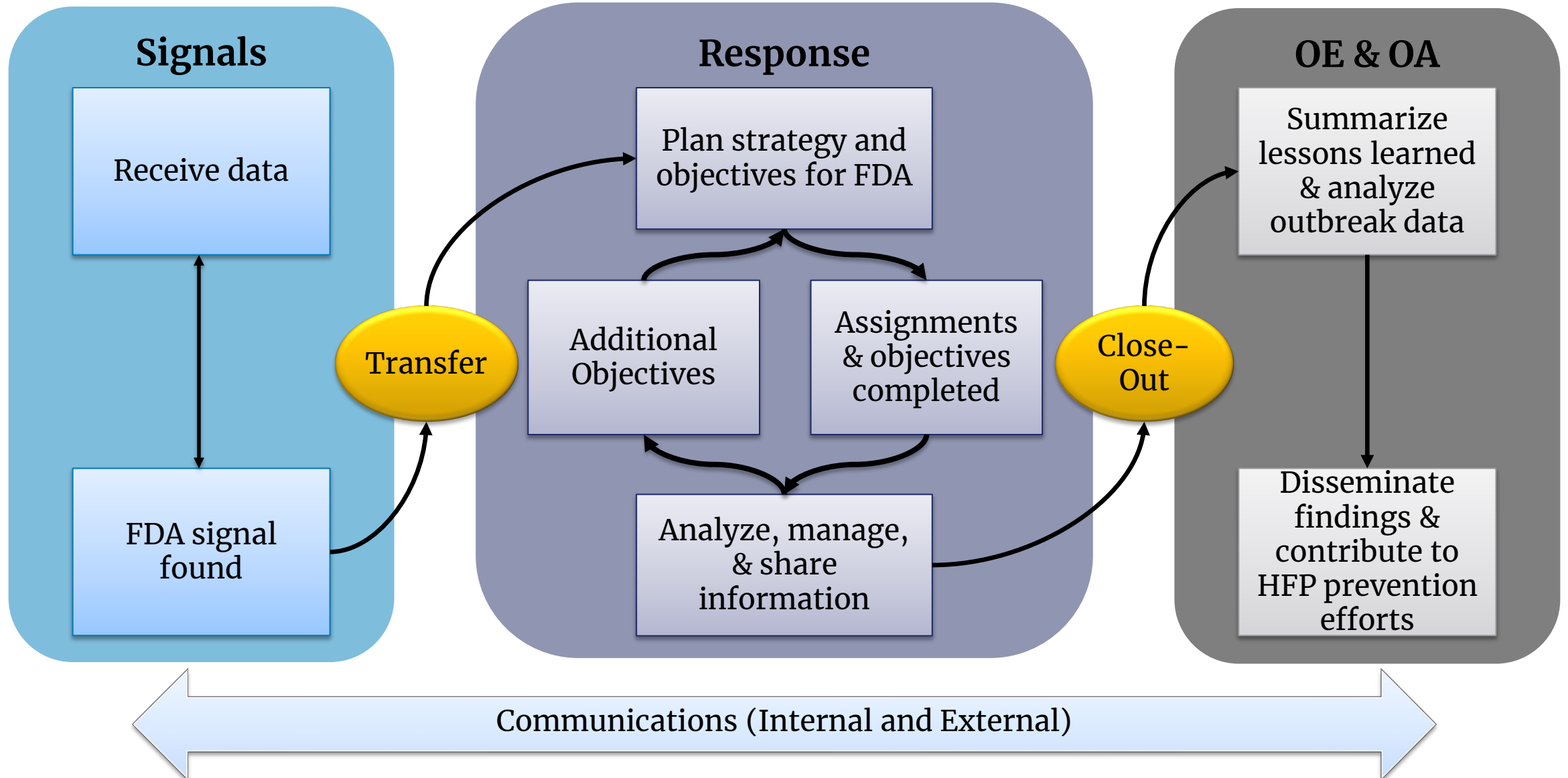
Routine Weekly Meetings



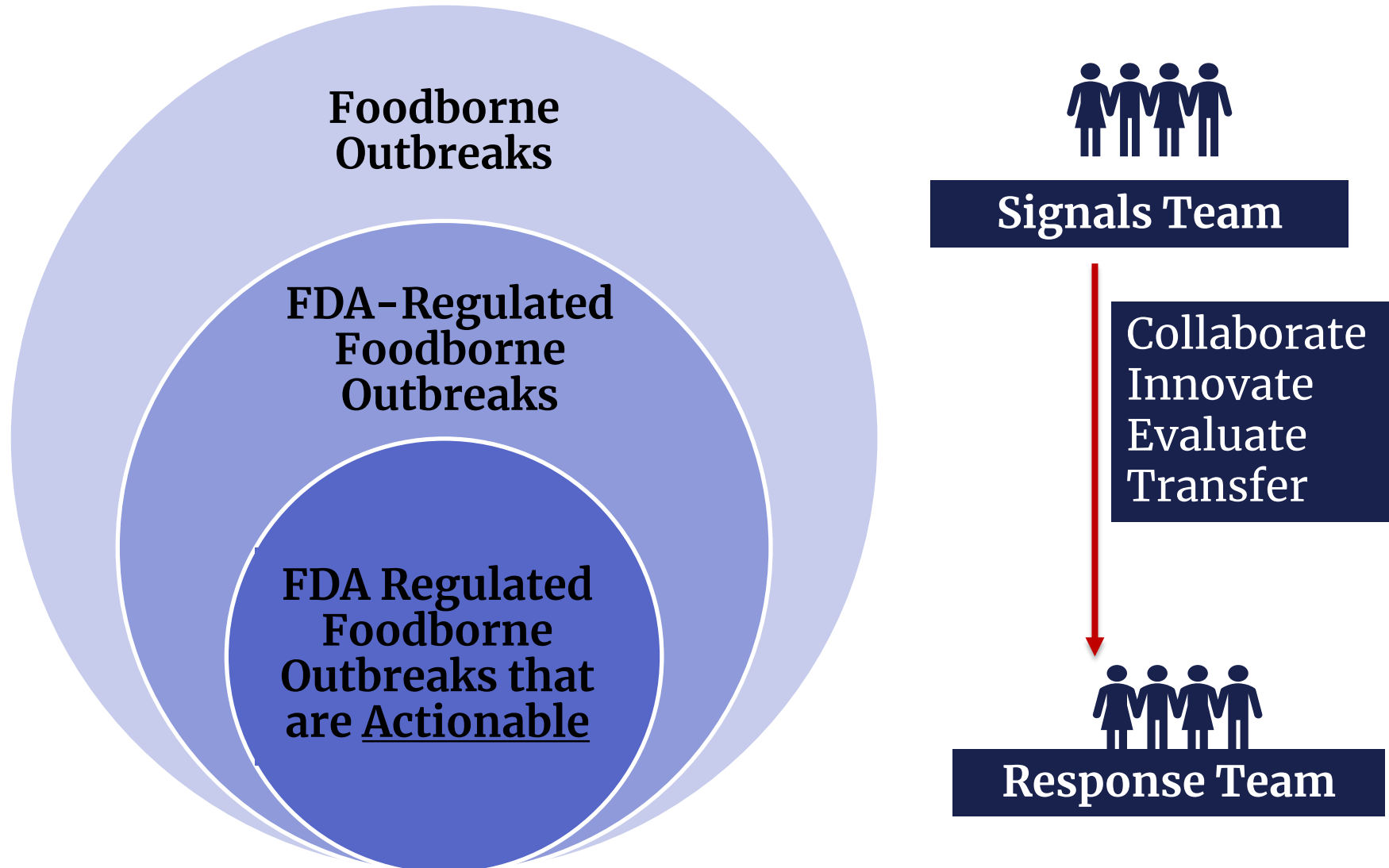
- Federal Tri-Agency Call (CDC/FDA/USDA-FSIS)
- FDA and CDC Investigation Multistate Calls
- CDC/FDA/USDA CORE Check-ins
- FDA/CDC/USDA Senior Leadership Check-in
- Ad-hoc Team Calls
- Constant Email and Instant Message

Communicating early and often fuels **faster, smarter outbreak response**

CORE Process



Signals & Surveillance



Response

| Evaluation | ICS Structure | Coordination & Guidance | Assignments | Traceback | Documentation |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Evaluate Information to determine outbreak response objectives and serve as FDA outbreak subject matter experts</p> | <p>Use Incident Command System to provide the essential principles, structure and roles and responsibilities to effectively respond to an outbreak</p> | <p>Coordinate and Guide the flow of information between internal and external organizations</p> | <p>Develop assignments for record collection, sample collection, and environmental investigations and inspections</p> | <p>Conduct traceback of suspect and confirmed outbreak-associated vehicles</p> | <p>Document incident activities and summaries; internally report incident updates daily for situational awareness</p> |

Outbreak Evaluation (OE)

- Historical Outbreak Data Analysis & Evaluation of Similar Pathogen/Commodity Pairs
 - Determine trends in epidemiological data, traceback data (to include repetitively identified firms), laboratory data, investigation observations, and product/firm actions to guide future outbreak investigations and post-outbreak activities.
- Contribution to FDA Prevention Strategies and Activities
 - Contributes historical outbreak data to inform:
 - FDA surveillance assignments
 - FDA research studies
 - FDA working groups
- Sharing Publication & Outreach
 - Share historical outbreak data through conferences, meetings and publications
- Partnering in FDA One Health Initiative
 - Share applicable outbreak data with the FDA One Health Committee
 - Contribute to inter- and intra- agency collaborations

Outbreak Analytics (OA)



- The OA Team conducts post-response analyses/activities to anticipate, address, and learn from outbreaks, with the goal of guiding and supporting preventive measures to reduce the frequency and impact of future outbreaks:
 - **Conducting Analyses**
 - In-depth analyses to help guide and support post-outbreak response and prevention efforts
 - *Examples:* Foodborne illness attribution studies, predictive data analytics and modeling, analyses that support regulatory activities
 - **Sharing Research Findings**
 - Peer-reviewed journal articles, Conference oral/poster presentations, Food Safety Magazine articles
 - **Leading Preventive Sampling and Inspectional Strategies**
 - Conduct analyses of internal and external data to examine both novel and repeat outbreaks, research areas at risk for future outbreaks, and help guide current and future inspectional and sampling approaches
 - **Contributing Expertise through Collaborations**
 - *Examples:* Interagency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration (IFSAC), FoodNet Steering Committee, FDA's Leafy Greens Action Plan workgroup (LGAP), *Cyclospora* workgroup, Foodborne illness dynamics and COVID workgroup, FSMA Metrics workgroup, Collaborations with FDA's compliance and investigation groups.

Communications

- Provides strategic communications
- Ensures consistent and coordinated messaging during outbreaks
- Develops talking points, FAQs, and outbreak advisories
- Participates on inter-agency workgroups to enhance outbreak communications efforts with CDC and USDA
- Works with internal and external stakeholders

Since August 2011, CORE has been responsible for over 800 advisories and updates

CORE outbreak advisories were viewed by more than a million users in 2025 (average time on CORE pages: 2-4 minutes)

Outbreak Advisories are the most frequently visited pages within FDA's Food section.

CORE Outbreak Investigation Table (CIT)



- Launched in November 2020 in response to stakeholder requests for improved transparency regarding ongoing outbreaks
- Shares information on FDA foodborne illness outbreak investigations, even in the early stages of investigation.
- Incidents are added and updated every Wednesday.
- Gives consumers early awareness of developing multistate outbreaks occurring across the U.S. even when information is limited.

Active Investigations

| Date Posted | Reference # | Pathogen or Cause of Illness | Product(s) Linked to Illnesses (if any) | Total Case Count | Investigation Status | Outbreak/Event Status | Recall Initiated | FDA Traceback Initiated | FDA Inspection Initiated | FDA Sampling Initiated |
|-------------|-------------|---|---|------------------------------|----------------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 3/16/2026 | 1369 | E. coli O157:H7 | Raw Cheddar Cheese | See Advisory | Active | Ongoing See Advisory | See Advisory | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2/25/2026 | 1366 | Salmonella Newport | Not Yet Identified | 69 | Active | Ongoing See Advice | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 2/11/2026 | 1365 | Salmonella Newport & Kentucky | Moringa Powder | See Advisory | Active | Ended See Advisory | See Advisory | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 1/14/2026 | 1358 | Salmonella Typhimurium & Newport | Moringa Leaf Powder | See Advisory | Active | Ended See Advisory | See Advisory | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 11/8/2025 | 1350 | Clostridium botulinum | Infant Formula | See Advisory | Active | Ended See Advisory | See Advisory | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Outbreak Incident Summary Abstracts



- In 2025, CORE began posting redacted incident summary abstracts at the end of CORE outbreak and adverse event investigations.
- <https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/foodborne-illness-outbreak-executive-incident-summary-abstracts>

CORE Executive Incident Summary Abstracts

| | |
|---|---|
| 2026 Investigations | ^ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salmonella Newport and Kentucky/Moringa Leaf/2026 (ref #1365) | |
| 2025 Investigations | ^ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salmonella Saintpaul/Mango/2025 (ref #1353)• Salmonella Africana/Not Identified/2025 (ref #1351)• Listeria monocytogenes/Prepared Pasta Meals/2025 (ref #1290)• Listeria monocytogenes/Not Identified/2025 (ref #1309)• Salmonella Richmond/Moringa Leaf/2025 (ref #1345)• Salmonella Lomalinda/Spring Mix/2025 (ref #1339)• Listeria monocytogenes/Not Identified/2025 (ref #1334) | |

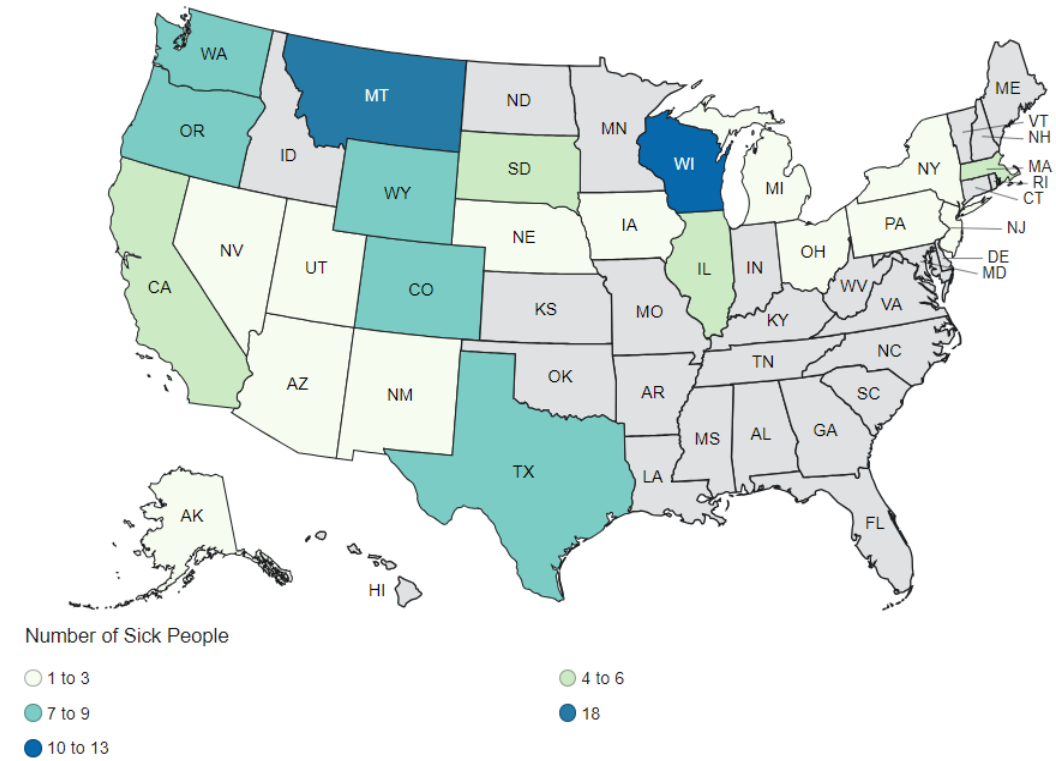
S. Typhimurium/Cucumber/Nov 2024



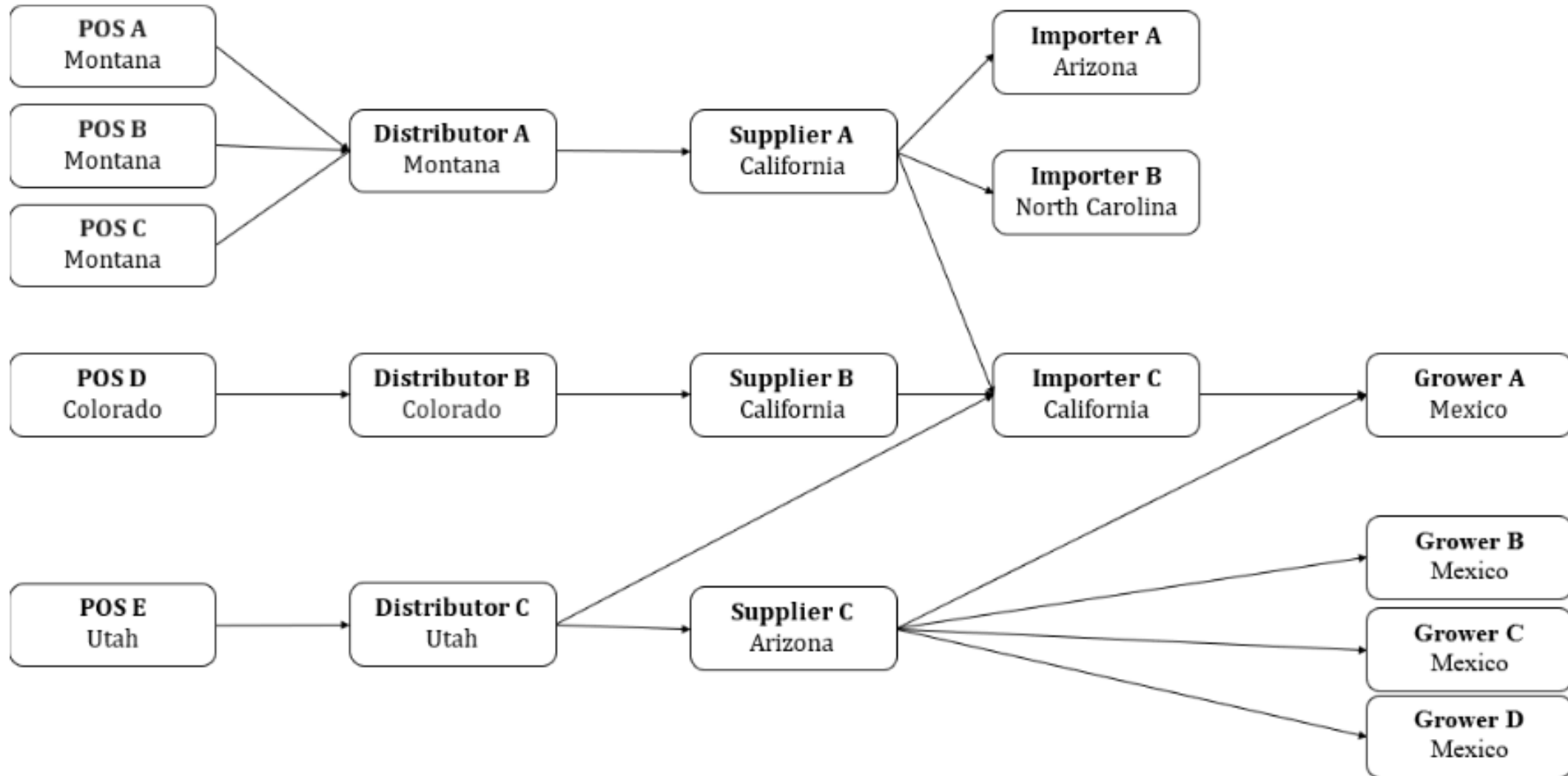
Epidemiology



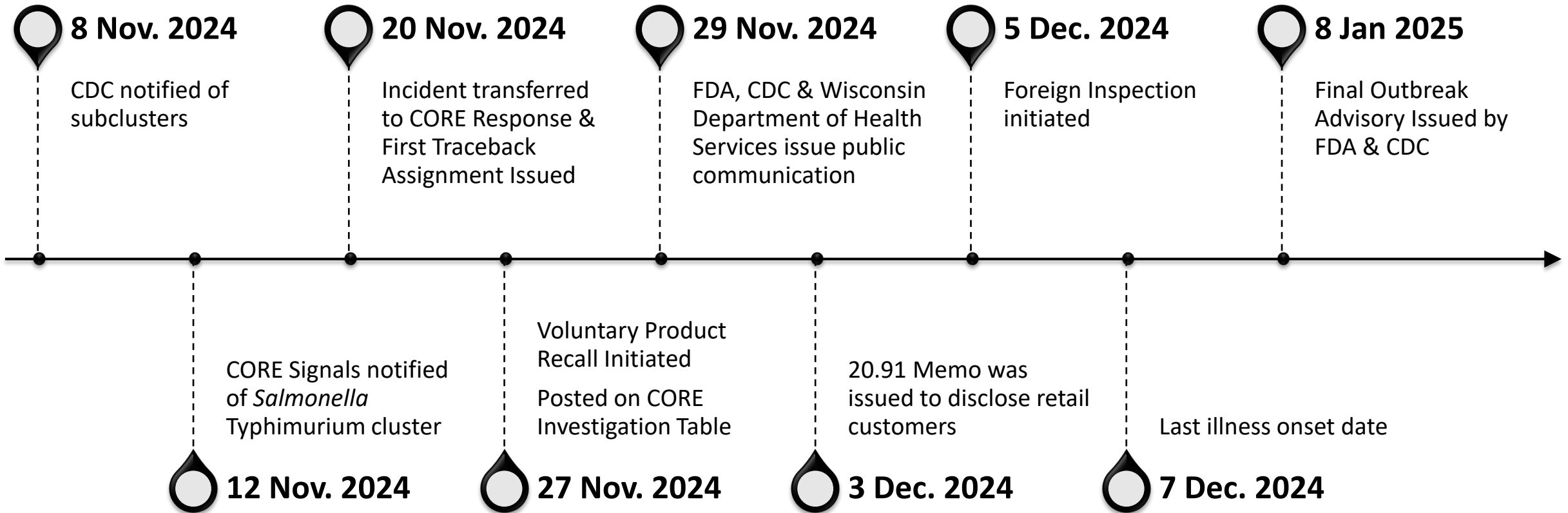
- 113 cases in 23 states
- 28 hospitalizations
- 0 Deaths
- Isolation: Oct 16 – Dec 18, 2024



Traceback



Outbreak Timeline





Information Sharing Types

- **Commissioned**
 - Hold FDA Credentials
- **20.88**
 - Long-Term
 - Case-Specific

How Can You Help During Investigation

- **Evidence Collection**
 - Photographs of all labeling of the product, including front, back, size, all codes.
 - Receipts of purchase
 - Shopper card information
 - Traceback documents (Invoice, Bill of Lading)
 - Farm investigations
 - Sampling





Human Foods Program