

103 CASES OF SALMONELLOSIS LINKED TO NORTH CAROLINA CHURCH FUNDRAISER MEAL

At least 13 individuals who ate at a barbecue event were hospitalized with symptoms including abdominal cramping, diarrhea and vomiting



North Carolina health officials are investigating an outbreak of salmonellosis linked to food served at a church fundraiser. Investigators said that community members began reporting illnesses in the days after they consumed food sold at Sandy Plains Baptist Church on September 7, 2013. Symptoms included abdominal cramping, nausea, diarrhea and vomiting.

As many as 5,000 people attended the barbecue event. Barbecue pork and chicken were served at the fundraiser, as well as vegetables and desserts. A specific food item has yet to be identified as the source.

Sandy Plain Baptist Church has sponsored the barbecue event for 50 years. Proceeds finance missions and a Christmas nativity scene.

Community dinners can be great fundraisers but are often held at temporary sites and staffed by volunteers unfamiliar with safe food handling practices for large meals.



What You Can Do

- All preparers should know safe cooking/cooling temperatures and procedures. Hold meals and ingredients requiring temperature control either below 41°F or above 135°F.
- Verify cooking and holding temperatures with a tip-sensitive digital thermometer.
- Purchase ingredients from commercial food businesses instead of homemade/donated foods and ask about food safety systems for suppliers.
- Avoid cross-contamination between ready-to-eat foods and potentially contaminated foods, surfaces and utensils.
- Practice good personal hygiene and exclude ill individuals from handling food.