ALERT #2 - EPI Update, July 8, 2013 – ALERT #2 Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) lowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Outbreak of Cyclopora in Iowa

The Iowa Department of Public Health and local public health agencies are continuing to investigate an outbreak of an intestinal illness caused by *Cyclospora* (a rare parasite).

As of today, July 8, 22 cases of *Cyclospora* infections have been reported to IDPH; almost all have been identified through testing at the State Hygienic Lab (SHL), including:

- Linn County 10 cases
- Fayette County 3 cases
- O'Brien County 2 cases
- Webster County 2 cases
- Benton County 1 case
- Des Moines County 1 case
- Mills County 1 case
- Polk County 1 case
- Van Buren County 1 case

Most people's illness began in mid to late June, and at least one person has been hospitalized. Many people report still being ill with diarrhea and some have had relapses.

Additional cases have been identified in Nebraska and other Midwestern states. IDPH is coordinating the investigation with public health officials in Nebraska, other states, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- The investigation is ongoing; no specific source of exposure has been identified.
- Fresh produce (fresh fruits and vegetables) have been implicated in previous outbreaks.
- Washing fresh produce is recommended, however it can be very difficult to wash *Cyclospora* off all types of produce.

Healthcare providers are encouraged to test patients for *Cyclospora* if they have diarrheal illness lasting more than a couple days or diarrhea accompanied by severe anorexia or fatigue. *Important:* When ordering an O&P (ova and parasite test), *Cyclospora* must be specifically ordered. Specimens should be submitted to the State Hygienic Laboratory for testing.

Recommended treatment for adults is trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole twice daily for 7 days (160 mg trimethoprim and 800 mg sulfamethoxazole in adults).

Foodborne outbreaks of cyclosporiasis have traditionally been linked to various types of fresh produce (most imported), including raspberries, basil, snow peas, and mesclun lettuce. People become infected with *Cyclospora* by consuming food or water contaminated with the parasite, which causes a watery diarrheal that lasts an average of 57 days if untreated.

Symptoms of cyclosporiasis include:

- Watery diarrhea
- Fatigue (severe tiredness)
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Bloating
- Increased gas
- Stomach cramps
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Muscle aches
- Low-grade fever

 $For more information, visit \underline{www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Cyclospora or \underline{www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis/}$