Genesee County Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: December 18, 2012 END DATE: January 1, 2013

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RE: Food Safety Consumer Advisory

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) issued a consumer warning regarding salsas produced in an unlicensed facility by Garner Gourmet Food Group of Flint under the "Courtney's Gourmet" label. These salsas in glass jars were sold via various school and other organizational fundraisers and online through the company's website. This product advisory involves all batches and sizes of glass jars of Courtney's Gourmet salsas, including:

Fruit Salsas:

Raspberry (mild)
Strawberry (mild)
Fiery Roasted Habanero and Pineapple (mild)
Angry Roasted Habanero and Pineapple Tropical Mango (mild)
Cherry Mild

Specialty Salsas:

Roasted Garlic and Olive (medium)
Chunky Garden Fresh Cilantro (mild)
Chunky Garden Fresh Cilantro (hot)
Black Bean and Corn (mild)
Angry Black Bean and Corn
Zesty Raspberry BBQ Chipotle (seasonal)
Smokin' Hot Chipotle

Better Life Through Better Health
Floyd J. McCree Courts & Human Services Building ♦ 630 S. Saginaw Street, Ste. 4 ♦ Flint, Michigan 48502-1540
Burton Branch ♦ G-3373 S. Saginaw Street ♦ Burton, Michigan 48529
Main Phone 810-257-3612 ♦ Visit us at: www.gchd.us

Salsas (continued):

Original Red Salsas:
Medium
Flaming Hot
Blazin' Extra Hot

Verdes Salsas:
Fiery Salsa Verdes
Salsa Verde XXX Hot (supernova)

During an inspection of a school by local health department staff, concern over the safety of the product was identified and reported to MDARD. MDARD and local health departments are continuing to investigate and seizing product as it is found.

Selling processed foods from an unlicensed facility is in violation of the Michigan Food Law. The unlicensed product was discovered as a result of a complaint received by the department. **Consumers are warned not to use the product even if it does not look or smell spoiled.**

Bottled or canned salsas, if not properly processed, can result in contamination of the product with Clostridium botulinum. Botulism is a serious, potentially fatal illness caused by eating food contaminated with botulinum toxin. Although cases are rare, botulism attacks the nervous system, and in its severe forms, can cause respiratory failure. Symptoms include double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth, and muscle weakness. Symptoms usually begin 18-36 hours after eating contaminated food, but they can occur as early as six hours or as late as 10 days.

No reports of illness as a result of consuming these products have been reported at this time. Anyone concerned about an injury from consumption of the products should contact a physician.

Consumers should return the product to the place of purchase or dispose of it in a sealed container in the trash so that people and animals, including wild animals, can't get to it.

If you have questions about the consumer advisory, please contact MDARD at 800-292-3939.