# Control *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) in Your Deli

## Protect your customers from potential *Lm* contamination on deli products.

**What is *Lm*?**
*Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) is a bacterium that contaminates food and causes a serious infection called listeriosis. An estimated 1,600 people get listeriosis each year, and about 260 die. The infection is most likely to sicken pregnant women and their newborns, adults aged 65 or older, and people with weakened immune systems.

**Why is *Lm* contamination a concern at retail?**
*Lm* can be harbored in food production environments and cold storage areas. Transfer of *Lm* from the environment, equipment, employees, or raw food is a particular hazard of concern in retail delis. Food products, the environment, food equipment, and employee practices are all potential sources of *Lm* contamination at retail. *Lm* contamination causes deli meat and poultry products to become adulterated and unsafe to eat.

**What steps can retailers take to control *Lm* at retail?**

**1** Eliminate visibly adulterated products (e.g., hair or insects on product, etc.) present in the retail deli.

**2** Eliminate facility conditions in the deli area or storage area that could cause the products to become adulterated (e.g., condensation dripping on exposed product, construction dust, or broken equipment).

**3** Ensure that insanitary conditions (e.g., flies, rodent droppings, mold, or dirty surfaces) are not present where deli meat and poultry products are prepared, packed, and held.

**4** Do not prepare, hold, or store deli meat or poultry products near or directly adjacent to raw products.

**5** Cover, wrap, or otherwise protect all opened deli meat or poultry products when not in use to prevent cross-contamination.

**6** Clean and sanitize equipment used to process deli products at least every 4 hours.

**7** Refrigerate deli meat or poultry products promptly after use (e.g., slicing).

**8** Ensure that employees wash their hands properly and wear disposable gloves before handling deli products.

Scan the QR Code linking to the *Retail Lm Guidance*.