

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) February 16, 2010

U.S. food safety regulators on Tuesday made public a January warning letter to Eggo waffle maker Kellogg Co in which they said the company had not gone far enough to address food safety violations at its Atlanta frozen food plant.

An October 2009 Atlanta plant inspection found bacterial contamination and sanitation violations such as improper handling of trash and food, and insufficiently sanitized equipment, the FDA said.

The FDA's letter, dated January 27, comes after the Georgia Department of Agriculture found *Listeria* bacteria in Eggo Buttermilk Waffles on August 31.

Kellogg's plant had "significant deviations" from the manufacturing practices for food manufacturers and Kellogg's response so far had not addressed the violations, the agency wrote.

Kellogg said on Tuesday it has fully addressed all of the violations and that its response to the FDA letter would be filed shortly.

FDA inspectors found *Listeria* on five swabs from around the Atlanta plant. One of those positive swabs came from the wheels of a forklift used in the plant.

*Listeria* is a bacteria that can contaminate food and cause a mild illness or a severe, sometimes life-threatening, illness called invasive listeriosis.

The FDA said the company listed a number of corrective actions in its November 18 updated response to the agency, but said Kellogg needed to go further.

FDA said it is "essential" for Kellogg to identify all of the areas in its facility where *Listeria* can grow and survive and to take the actions necessary to control the organism. The regulator also recommended that Kellogg start a pathogen monitoring program.

Kellogg said the inspections were conducted after the plant was closed for enhanced cleaning and repairs from a flood that affected production at the plant.

The company said it worked with FDA and the Georgia Department of Agriculture prior to opening the plant and that it completed comprehensive testing and monitoring.

"We have made a variety of enhancements in our facility, and have fully addressed all of the observations in the letter," Kellogg spokesman Kris Charles said in an email.