

THE RECALL ECONOMY™ | RESEARCH PULSE 001

One Recall Is Rarely One Recall

This research started with two signals less than 12 hours apart.

Late one night last week, I came across a news story that Walmart's Great Value Organic Triple Berry Blend had been recalled because of potential E. coli contamination.

What caught my attention was that this was not a new recall. It was an expansion of a frozen organic blueberry recall announced nearly two months earlier.

The next morning, Lindsay Doherty, our VP of Global Sales at Laava, told our team that recalls were taking up more and more mindshare in her conversations with prospects.

That coincidence sent me off to do some primary research into recent consumer product recalls.

What initially looked like a collection of isolated incidents quickly revealed something more systemic.

We reviewed 100 recent recall records. After consolidating duplicates and excluding one unresolved announcement, 92 distinct notices remained.

Of those 92, 32 showed a documented chain-reaction signal.

That is 35%, or more than one in three.

The Clover Hill Dairy Listeria recall shows what that looks like in the real world.

The initial notice covered soft, ricotta-style cheeses sold in retail packages and in bulk two- and five-gallon containers.

The bulk product could then be repacked by downstream sellers. Brand names, labels and product codes could change along the way.

Nine days later, the recall expanded from those soft cheeses to all Clover Hill Dairy brand cheeses.

Additional notices brought more consumer-facing identities into the recall, including La Colonia and Selectos Latinos, as well as retail packages with no brand name at all.

A downstream notice tied the products to an outbreak associated with 12 illnesses and sadly, one death.

Failures of product safety, integrity and authenticity are not theoretical.

They can cost lives, destroy trust and erase enterprise value.

This is the Recall Economy.

The first problem is a breakdown in the safety, integrity or authenticity of a physical product.

The second is whether the company whose name and trust are attached to it can identify every affected item, under every identity and across every handoff, and reach whoever has it.

That second problem is where time, trust and economic value are won or lost.

This first Research Pulse is a snapshot. Future editions will use primary research to surface the patterns hidden inside individual recalls and track how they evolve.

But even this first snapshot raises a larger question:

For companies making products that go in or on the body, when does trusted product identity stop being optional technology and become a basic duty of care?

Because once a product's safety, integrity or authenticity is in question, three questions matter most:

Which exact products are affected?

Where are they?

And who has them?

#ProductRecall #SupplyChain #Traceability #FoodSafety