

Fast FACTS



Melamine October 2, 2008

At a glance: *Q&A for Possible Customer Questions Regarding Melamine*

Chinese authorities confirmed they have found traces of Melamine in dairy products, including baby formula, sold in China and exported to other countries. The chemical is estimated to be in 12 percent of Chinese milk powder products. So far, 53,000 children have been sickened, and four have died in that country. Melamine can cause kidney or bladder stones and can lead to kidney failure. To date, there is NO known threat of contamination in infant formula in the United States.

The Issue: Melamine is a toxic chemical used in plastics and fertilizer. According to media reports, the chemical was found in Chinese dairy products and milk-derived ingredients and finished food products containing milk, such as candies, desserts, and beverages that could contain these ingredients from Chinese sources.

On September 12, the FDA issued a Health Information Advisory to proactively reassure the American public that there is NO KNOWN THREAT of contamination in infant formula in the United States. Further, the agency broadened its domestic and import sampling and testing of Milk-derived ingredients to test for the chemical. If any product is found to be adulterated because they contain melamine and/or a melamine analog, the FDA will take action to prevent the products from entering the U.S. food supply. The advisory also warned members of Chinese communities in the United States that infant formula and candies manufactured in China, possibly available for purchase at Asian markets, could pose a risk to infants.

As a result of these findings, several countries around the globe have implemented bans or restrictions on milk products imported from China. Further, several international food companies are testing their products and issuing recalls as preventive measures (until they can be sure their products are not contaminated).

U.S. Foodservice Position: U.S. Foodservice does not import any private label dairy product from China and no products distributed by U.S. Foodservice have been identified as containing Chinese milk or milk-derived ingredients. We continue to be proactive and maintain contact with our suppliers. Should we have any questions about the safety of any of the products we distribute, our very fast and effective recall procedure will communicate immediately with all customers affected.

What you can do:

- Always purchase your products from approved sources
- Partner with a distributor with strong quality assurance and food safety programs
- Do not purchase or use products unless the label is in English- it is against the law to sell a product labeled only in a foreign language. Products containing only Chinese characters have not gone through an approval process and may contain ingredients outlawed in the U.S.

The "fast facts" will be updated as news becomes available. Please contact Greg Pallaske, Director of Regulatory Compliance (847.232.5884) for additional information.

