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FDA Updates Health Information Advisory on Melamine Contamination

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is alerting consumers that seven Mr. Brown instant coffee and milk tea products are being recalled by the Taiwanese company, King Car Food Industrial Co. Ltd., due to possible contamination with melamine. The recalled products are:

- Mr. Brown Mandheling Blend Instant Coffee (3-in-1)
- Mr. Brown Arabica Instant Coffee (3-in-1)
- Mr. Brown Blue Mountain Blend Instant Coffee (3-in-1)
- Mr. Brown Caramel Macchiato Instant Coffee (3-in-1)
- Mr. Brown French Vanilla Instant Coffee (3-in-1)
- Mr. Brown Mandhling Blend instant Coffee (2-in-1)
- Mr. Brown Milk Tea (3-in-1)

The FDA recommends that consumers not consume any of the above Mr. Brown instant coffee and milk tea products. The FDA also recommends that retailers and foodservice operators remove the products from sale or service.

As of September 25, 2008, the FDA testing of milk based products imported into the United States from China has not found melamine contamination.

The FDA is working with regulatory agencies in other countries. The New Zealand Food Safety Authority reports that its testing of White Rabbit Creamy Candies has shown melamine contamination at high levels. In light of the widespread contamination of milk and milk-based products in China and the New Zealand Food Safety Authority's finding, the FDA recommends that consumers not eat White Rabbit Creamy Candy and that retailers and foodservice operations remove the product from sale or service.

To date, the FDA is not aware of any illnesses in the United States stemming from consumption of either White Rabbit Creamy Candy or the Mr. Brown instant coffee and milk tea products.

Individuals who have experienced any health problems after consuming either White Rabbit Creamy Candy or any of the identified Mr. Brown coffee and tea products are advised to contact their health care professional.

Background

On September 12, 2008, in light of reports from China of melamine contaminated infant formula, the FDA issued a Health Information Advisory to assure the American public that there is no known threat of contamination in infant formula manufactured by companies that have met the requirements to sell such products in the United States. That advisory also warned members of Chinese communities in the United States that infant formula manufactured in China, possibly available for purchase at Asian markets, could pose a risk to infants.

The FDA had contacted the companies who manufacture infant formula for distribution in the United States and received, from the companies, information that they are not importing formula or sourcing milk-based materials from China.

At the same time, the FDA—in conjunction with state and local officials—began a nation-wide investigation to check Asian markets for Chinese manufactured infant formula that may have been brought into the United States. In particular, this effort focused on areas of the country with large Chinese communities, such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and New York. To date, investigators have visited more than 1,400 retail markets and have not found Chinese infant formula present on shelves in these markets.

The FDA also advises consumers not to purchase infant formula manufactured in China from Internet sites or from other sources.

The FDA has taken, and will continue to take, proactive measures to help ensure the safety of the American food supply. In conjunction with state and local officials, the FDA will continue to check Asian markets for food items that are imported from China and that could contain a significant amount of milk or milk proteins.

In addition, the FDA has broadened its domestic and import sampling and testing of milk-derived ingredients and finished food products containing milk, such as candies, desserts, and beverages that could contain these ingredients from Chinese sources. Milk-derived ingredients include whole milk powder, non-fat milk powder, whey powder, lactose powder, and casein.

In addition to state and local governments, the FDA is working in close cooperation with Customs and Border Protection within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, other federal agencies, and foreign governments.