

MARKET September 2022 NEWS



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Focus on China

Law strengthens food quality



Enterprises and cooperatives should be responsible for agricultural products

The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's top legislature, passed the newly revised Law on Quality and Safety of Agricultural Products on Friday.

The revised law strengthens the responsibilities of local authorities and business

operators in ensuring the quality and safety of agricultural products during the entire process from production to consumption.

Yue Zhongming, an official with the NPC Standing Committee's Legislative Affairs Commission, said the revised law included farmers into the scope of supervision, stipulating that enterprises and cooperatives of agricultural production should be responsible for the quality and safety of agricultural products.

Food producers should check certifications and qualifications according to the Food Safety Law when they purchase agricultural products as food materials, the law said.

Given the emerging new forms of agricultural product sales, the law also stipulated the responsibilities of online platform operators selling the products, and of people involved in the cold chain logistics of the products, Yue said.

In the definition of the safety and quality of agricultural products, the law added that the agricultural products in the market should meet the quality and safety standards, which should be strictly implemented.

The law also stipulated the scientific use of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, and the control of the quality and safety from the production base.

It added safety requirements for the storage and transportation of the agricultural products, preventing secondary pollution of the products, Yue said.

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The risk evaluation results of agricultural products' quality and safety should be reported not only to market supervision and health departments, but also local bureaus of agriculture and rural affairs, according to the law.

County-level authorities of agriculture and rural affairs should improve the supervision and management of agricultural products' quality and safety during the entire process.

The random inspection of the quality and safety of agricultural products should be improved, while samples collected should be paid for at market price, Yue said.

Wang Tiehan, chief inspector of food safety at the State Administration for Market Regulation, said that random inspections in the first half of this year showed 2.51 percent of the 2.37 million batches of food products contained substandard samples, a year-on-year increase of 0.17 percent.

“The unqualified rates in six categories including agricultural products and catering food increased year-on-year,” he said at an event on Monday to kick off China Food Safety Publicity Week.

The excessive pesticide and veterinary medicine residues on vegetables, fruits and aquatic products are among major problems found during the inspection, he added.

The revised law strengthened the punishment of illegal actions. Considering the real condition of farmers, the relatively light punishment on farmers will both deter them from wrongdoing and guide them to regulate their activities, Yue

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said.

Enacted in 2006, the Law on Quality and Safety of Agricultural Products has played an important role in ensuring the food safety and boosting the rural economy.

The revised law will take effect on Jan 1.

Bakery gets fingers burned over unlicensed lockdown sales



Shanghai's market regulator on Saturday defended its decision to fine the

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Shanghai subsidiary of popular bakery chain Paris Baguette, for violating food safety regulations during the COVID-19 outbreak in April, apparently in response to the online uproar over the decision.

A fine of 585,000 yuan (\$84,800) has been issued as the minimum possible punishment in accordance with China's Food Safety Law, and the decision is not yet final as “the case is still undergoing statutory administrative reconsideration”, the Shanghai Administration of Market Regulations said in a statement released on Saturday night.

Shanghai SPC Foodstuff Co, the Shanghai subsidiary of Paris Baguette, has the legal right to object, the statement continued.

As of the time of publication, Paris Baguette had yet to comment on the penalty, which was disclosed on Aug 12, arousing public concern and ranking among the most searched stories on the microblogging site Sina Weibo for a number of days.

The bakery was found to have accepted community group-buying orders and to have produced and sold baked goods at a training center on Laohongjing Road in Minhang district between April 23 and 26 during the city's 2-month lockdown. The training center in question was not licensed for food production or associated activities.

The irregularity occurred as a result of the bakery being forced to close its licensed factory premises at 759 Jinglian Road and arrangements for employees unable to return to their residences due to the lockdown to remain at the



training center until the situation could be resolved.

At first, the employees used the center's equipment and raw materials to make bread for their own consumption.

As the lockdown continued, the demand for baked goods from the surrounding communities increased and on April 23, it began to produce goods at the training center for sale via group purchase, a move appreciated by customers.

By April 26, the company had sold baked goods valued at 58,500 yuan. Operations halted on April 27 after an inspection by market regulators following a tip-off.

China's Food Safety Law stipulates that the income, tools, equipment, raw materials and other items used for the unlicensed production of food are liable to confiscation, and that a fine of between 10 and 20 times the value of the goods sold may be imposed.

“Food safety is about public health and safety, and is the top priority of market supervision. In the Paris Baguette case, the case-handling department considered the situation, such as the duration of unlicensed operations and the amount involved, and issued a lighter punishment in accordance with the legal minimums stipulated by the Food Safety Law,”the statement said.

While some commentators have supported the administration's decision to uphold food safety, others consider the penalty too harsh in light of the unusual circumstances resulting from the citywide lockdown.

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Many commentators shared the view of a citizen surnamed Chen: "Law is law, especially when it comes to food safety. Yet goodwill should not be punished. Legal enforcement should also take into consideration the circumstances of the offense, during such unusual circumstances amid a citywide lockdown."

However, as a result of the uproar over the penalty, many have also said they would buy from the bakery "to repay its goodwill".

Paris Baguette is an international bakery chain owned by South Korea's SPC Group. Since first entering China in 2004, the company has expanded its operations to more than 300 outlets nationwide.

International News

FDA Releases Food Safety Prevention Strategies

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is taking further action to help prevent outbreaks of foodborne illnesses associated with certain foods through the development of food safety prevention strategies.

When a foodborne illness outbreak occurs, the FDA, through its Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation (CORE) Network and federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, and international public health partners, as appropriate, work together to determine what food may have caused the outbreak and how it became contaminated. After the outbreak investigation ends, the information learned can be used to contribute to a food safety prevention strategy for that

food.

These prevention strategies are an affirmative, deliberate approach undertaken by the FDA and stakeholders to help limit or prevent future outbreaks, similar to the approach taken as part of the Leafy Green STEC Action Plan (LGAP), which has outlined multi-faceted steps to reduce Shiga toxin-producing E. coli outbreaks associated with the consumption of leafy greens. The strategies examine commodity-hazard pairings, potential sources and routes of contamination, and what can be done to reduce incidences of foodborne illness in the future. The strategies also identify existing knowledge gaps and needed areas of focus to inform and promote research and engagement with external stakeholders on steps that can be taken, collaboratively, to protect public health and prevent future outbreaks.

While the agency is working with industry, state, international and other partners on the development of several food safety prevention strategies, the FDA is releasing the following first two strategies:

- [Salmonellosis and listeriosis associated with imported enoki and wood ear mushrooms](#)
- [Salmonellosis associated with bulb onions](#)

Additional prevention strategies for other foods will be released as they become available.

The food safety prevention strategies build on the foundational work established by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act and FDA's Strategy for

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the Safety of Imported Food. They also leverage data enhancements and modern approaches embodied in FDA's New Era of Smarter Food Safety. New Era priorities reflected in the prevention strategies include invigorating root cause analyses and advancing the goals set forth in FDA's Foodborne Outbreak Response Improvement Plan.

You can view all the prevention strategies on the FDA Food Safety Prevention Strategy web page.

Nearly 200 sick in UK E. coli O157 outbreak

Public health officials in the United Kingdom are investigating an outbreak of E. coli O157 that has sickened almost 200 people in a month.

Since early September, 192 genetically linked cases of Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (STEC) O157 have been identified in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The majority of people sick are adults but there have been no deaths linked to the incident.

No source for the rise in infections has yet been identified but patients are being interviewed to help find the vehicle of infection.

There have also been no cases of hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) reported. HUS is a type of kidney failure associated with E. coli infections that can result in lifelong, serious health problems and death.

Dr. Lesley Larkin, head of surveillance, gastrointestinal infections and food safety at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), said a rise in E. coli cases notified to public health surveillance systems had been seen in recent weeks.

“The latest data shows early indications of a return back to expected levels for this time of year but we are continuing to closely monitor the situation. Whole genome sequencing shows us that this increase in reports is being driven by a particular strain of STEC O157 which has caused an outbreak, and we are investigating potential causes with public health and food safety experts in the UK and Ireland,” she said.

“Making sure you wash your hands with soap and water is the best way to stop this bug from spreading. When preparing food make sure you thoroughly wash salad, fruit and vegetables and follow all the safe cooking instructions for meat.”

Ethylene oxide and Salmonella feature in major FSA incidents

Salmonella in breaded chicken and ethylene oxide were two of the main incidents handled this past year by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

The FSA was notified of 2,336 food and feed safety incidents in England, Northern Ireland and Wales during 2021/22. This is an 18 percent increase compared to 1,978 alerts in 2020/21 but is similar to data in pre-COVID-19 pandemic years.

The top four hazard types in 2021/22 were pathogenic microorganisms, allergens, poor and insufficient controls and pesticide residues. Meat and meat products

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were behind the most incidents, followed by poultry meat and dietetic foods and food supplements.

Incidents associated with pathogens made up a quarter of the total which is up compared to previous years. The rise is reportedly linked to increased surveillance following a series of Salmonella outbreaks in breaded chicken products from Poland in 2020 and 2021, which sickened more than 1,000 people across multiple years with numerous products and brands affected.

Ingredient cross-contamination, cleanliness or sanitation and ingredient hygiene controls were the main root causes in pathogen incidents. Salmonella dominated while Listeria decreased slightly.

One event involved metal and plastic contamination of powdered soft drinks from the United States. Affected products were available via online marketplaces for purchase by UK consumers.

Ethylene oxide incident

A doubling of pesticide notifications was because of a large-scale issue across the EU and the UK linked to the presence of non-permitted ethylene oxide in foods, according to the report. Thousands of products were recalled or withdrawn in the UK and Europe.

The issue started in September 2020 in sesame seeds from India and is still ongoing, spreading to locust bean gum and food supplement ingredients. The UK managed the incident through product withdrawals rather than the EU approach of published recalls.

There were 129 ethylene oxide incidents in the UK from April 2021 until March 2022. The main products affected were dietetic foods, food supplements and fortified foods, food additives and flavorings, herbs and spices, ices and desserts, and other products including noodles.

Challenges of a different approach between the UK and EU were aided by regular meetings with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Food Standards Scotland.

There was a rise in poor and insufficient controls. This was part of a cross-agency response to manage possible food safety impacts of different border controls since EU exit for imports going through the EU and avoiding sanitary and phytosanitary checks on entry into the UK.

Incident detection and response

For allergen incidents, root cause analysis data showed labeling verification checks were the top contributor, followed by labeling declaration and procedures not followed.

A system created to help mitigate the loss of EU data identified several emerging issues where further investigation was required to determine UK risks. These included Listeria in enoki mushrooms and Salmonella in halva and tahini products from Syria which led to the removal of products from the market.

A feeder mice case study shows how FSA worked with Lithuanian authorities and the EU Commission to manage a serious outbreak of Salmonella affecting more than 1,000 people across several years, with a large impact on children. A

ban was put on feeder rodents from Lithuania to prevent future cases.

A report, scheduled to be published later this year, found that consumer awareness of recalls, and their understanding of actions to take, remained low. There was also little evidence of sharing of learning from incidents across industry and regulators to improve standards.

Two forums, the Food Industry Liaison Group (FILG) and the Importers Working Group (IMPWG), include industry trade associations that meet monthly to discuss food safety matters. They played a role in handling of the ethylene oxide and Salmonella feeder mice issues.

FDA Announces Targeted Sampling, Additional Efforts to Enhance the Safety of Leafy Greens

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is committed to enhancing the safety of leafy greens through continued implementation of the Leafy Greens STEC Action Plan (LGAP). As part of this effort the FDA is announcing targeted sampling of leafy greens grown on farms and ranches during the fall 2022 harvest season in the Salinas Valley region of California, releasing results from a 2021 sampling assignment, and providing an update on other work under the action plan.

One key aspect of the LGAP is sampling efforts that seek to detect and prevent contaminated product from reaching consumers and help leafy greens growers and processors identify practices or conditions that may present microbial risks so they can strengthen the microbiological safety of their operations.

During the fall 2022 harvest season the FDA plans to collect about 240 lettuce samples at farms/ranches in the Salinas Valley. These farms/ranches were identified by traceback investigations in recent years as being potentially associated with a foodborne illness outbreak in which lettuce or leafy greens were the likely or suspect food vehicle. The FDA also may collect environmental samples such as water, soil, and scat, as appropriate, based on observations made at the time of sampling and a farm/ranch's past inspection history. All samples will be tested for Salmonella spp. and E. coli O157:H7 and sampling will begin in mid-September 2022 and run through October 2022.

FDA steps up enforcement on imported fresh cilantro, seafood, canned foods

The Food and Drug Administration is continuing its use of import alerts to enforce U.S. food safety regulations for food from foreign countries. The agency updates and modifies the alerts as needed.

Recent modifications to FDA's import alerts, as posted by the agency, are listed below. [Click here](#) to go to the FDA page with links to details on specific alerts.

Import Alert	Desc Text
IA-16-105	Detention Without Physical Examination of Seafood and Seafood Products from Specific Manufacturers/Shippers Due to Decomposition and/or Histamines
IA-16-74	Detention without physical Examination of *** Uneviscerated Fish Or Partially Eviscerated Fish that are either Sat-Cured, Dried, Smoked Acidified, Pickled, Fermented or Brined
IA-24-23	IA 24-23 DETENTION WITHOUT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF FRESH CILANTRO FROM THE STATE OF PUEBLA; DER/MIG; Cilantro from Pueblo MX; LEX/LBL for State determination
IA-45-02	Detention Without Physical Examination and Guidance of Foods Containing Illegal and/or Undeclared Colors
IA-45-07	Detention Without Physical Examination of Food Products Containing Illegal Undeclared Sweeteners
IA-66-41	Detention Without Physical Examination of Unapproved New Drugs Promoted In The U.S.
IA-66-79	DWPE OF DRUGS FROM FOREIGN ESTABLISHMENTS REFUSING FDA INSPECTION
IA-95-04	Detention Without Physical Examination Of Laser Pointers, Laser Gunsights, Laser Levels, Laser Light Shows, Laser Pointer Key Chains, & Similar Products That Fail To Comply With Applicable Performance Standards And Reporting Requirements
IA-99-05	Detention Without Physical Examination of Raw Agricultural Products for Pesticides
IA-99-08	Detention Without Physical Examination Of Processed Human and Animal Foods for Pesticides
IA-99-22	Detention Without Physical Examination Of Foods Containing Undeclared Major Food Allergens Or Foods That Fail To Properly Label Major Food Allergens
IA-99-36	DETENTION WITHOUT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF LOW-ACID CANNED FOODS AND ACIDIFIED FOODS FROM COMMERCIAL PROCESSORS FOR FAILURE TO PROVIDE PROCESS INFORMATION
IA-99-39	DETENTION WITHOUT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF IMPORTED FOOD PRODUCTS THAT APPEAR TO BE MISBRANDED
IA-99-41	DWPE OF HUMAN AND ANIMAL FOODS IMPORTED FROM FOREIGN SUPPLIERS BY IMPORTERS WHO ARE NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF FSVP REGULATION
IA-99-45	Detention Without Physical Examination of Food Products That Are or Contain an Unsafe Food Additive
IA-99-46	Detention Without Physical Examination of Imported Human Foods Due to Filth

Enterprise News

Beef jerky recalled nationwide after testing finds Listeria



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The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has announced that Magnolia Provision Company Inc., a Knoxville, TN, establishment, is recalling 497 pounds of beef jerky products because of possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.

The problem was discovered when the establishment reported to FSIS that it received confirmation from their third-party lab that a product contact surface sample returned a positive result for *Listeria monocytogenes*.

FSIS is concerned that some product may be in consumers’ pantries. Consumers who have purchased these products are urged not to consume them. These products should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase.

The ready-to-eat beef jerky items were produced on Aug. 25.

The products subject to recall bear establishment number “EST. 8091” inside the USDA mark of inspection. These items were shipped to retail locations nationwide.

The following products are subject to recall:

- 2-oz. packages of “BEEF JERKY EXPERIENCE CHOP HOUSE STYLE PRIME RIB FLAVORED BEEF JERKY” with “EXP 8/25/23” displayed on the back of the package.
- 8-oz. packages of “BEEF JERKY EXPERIENCE CHOP HOUSE STYLE PRIME RIB FLAVORED BEEF JERKY” with “EXP 8/25/23” displayed on the back of the package.

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- 16-oz. packages of “BEEF JERKY EXPERIENCE CHOP HOUSE STYLE PRIME RIB FLAVORED BEEF JERKY” with “EXP 8/25/23” displayed on the back of the package.

As of the posting of this recall, there have been no confirmed reports of adverse reactions due to consumption of these products.

FDA warns parents not to give infants Mother’s Touch formula because it does not meet nutrient requirements



The FDA advises parents and caregivers not to buy or give Mother’s Touch Formula to infants under their care.

The product is being marketed as an infant formula without the required pre-market notification to the FDA, and it does not meet infant formula nutrient requirements for seven nutrients.

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In addition, the product was not fully tested for the presence of potentially harmful bacteria such as Cronobacter.

The product is sold in Pennsylvania at local markets in Kinzers, Loganton and Gap and was available for purchase directly from the Mother’s Touch website.

The FDA has determined that Mother’s Touch Formula is not manufactured in compliance with the FDA’s infant formula regulations.

Mother’s Touch Formula is not tested to determine if it meets the nutrient requirements for infant formula. Also, it does not meet the nutrient requirements for infant formula such that consumption of this formula has the potential to cause nutrient deficiencies or toxicity in infants.

Parents and caregivers of infants who have purchased this product should discontinue use and throw it away.

Parents and caregivers of infants who have used this product and are concerned about the health of their child should contact their health care provider.

Cheese recalled in Quebec because of E. coli concerns

Les Fromageries Pimar Inc. is recalling Bonvallis brand Nevat (cheese) because of E. coli contamination.

The recalled product was sold in Quebec, Canada, according to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Recalled products:

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Brand	Product	Size	UPC	Codes
Bonvallis	Nevat (cheese)	Approx. 2.4 kg	Batch: 32062022Best before: 18/11/2022	None

Consumers and retailers should not use, sell, serve or distribute the affected product.

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