

MARKET NEWS

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Focus on China

Testing and certification is crucial in facilitating the high-quality development of service trade

Chongqing - "Establishing an international platform for cooperation, communication, and mutual recognition in testing and certification is a crucial means to promote the domestic and international dual circulation development," said Wang Lijun, a Foreign Academician of the Russian Academy of Engineering.

In an exclusive interview with iChongqing and Bridging News, Wang said he would attend the Western International Testing and Certification Services Forum of the Fifth Western China International Fair for Investment and Trade (WCIFIT) on May 19.

Driving international cooperation and recognition for testing and certification

Wang highlighted the significant role of testing and certification in service trade, emphasizing its impact on enhancing product and service quality, strengthening consumer protection, and eliminating technical barriers and trade obstacles.

"To achieve these goals, it is necessary to establish mechanisms for international cooperation, mutual recognition of certification standards, and trade technology support institutions," said Wang.

He believes establishing international cooperation mechanisms is key to

facilitating collaboration among global inspection and testing institutions. Cooperation with international organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the International Organization for Standardization fosters the sharing of resources, knowledge, and skills, enhancing global interaction and cooperation.

Moreover, forming a mutual recognition system for certification standards fosters a mutually beneficial trade environment among nations. This entails countries mutually acknowledging and accepting each other's inspection and testing reports, thereby reducing trade frictions and barriers.

To realize this objective, efforts are required in international cooperation, information sharing, and testing and certification standards development.

Wang continued trade technology support institutions are also pivotal in developing the testing and certification industry. These institutions provide increased technical support and services to the industry, helping businesses expand their market share and conduct operations in the global market.

Simultaneously, this propels inspection and testing institutions towards internationalization, digitization, and innovation.

The testing and certification industry brings ample market opportunities

As the demand for product quality surges, the development of the testing and certification industry brings ample market opportunities for the quality control industry chain.

Manufacturing enterprises can ensure compliance with international standards and customer requirements through testing and certification, reducing production costs and enhancing consumer trust and brand reputation.

Rapid testing and certification services industry development also supports the biopharmaceutical industry chain. Testing and certification are crucial in anti-counterfeiting, control, management, and regulation within the biopharmaceutical industry chain.

Pharmaceutical products must undergo testing and certification to guarantee quality, reliability, and safety, ultimately ensuring patient well-being.

"As a high-tech industrial park, Chongqing High-tech Industrial Development Zone should strengthen the core competitiveness of the local testing and certification industry," said Wang.

This can be done through scientific and technological cooperation and exchange with major trading partners, developing related industries, promoting technological innovation, and empowering domestic industry leaders to attain heightened competitiveness to expand their market share internationally.

Standards for precooked food to heat up industry

Dalian in Liaoning province has established a list of designated standards to build itself into China's ready-to-cook seafood capital.

The city's administration for market regulation offered the first precooked food production license to a company on March 31 after its products met these strict

standards.

"With authoritative standards, it will effectively control food safety risks in the emerging food sector," said Deng Entang, president of the Dalian Premade-food Industry Association.

"It is a good opportunity for upgrading with higher standards and specifications," Deng said.

In recent years, quick-frozen and semi-cooked food with prepared ingredients have been gaining momentum domestically for their convenience, and have created an emerging sector with significant potential.

Since last year, Guangdong, Sichuan, Zhejiang and other provinces and cities have issued policy guidances and standards regarding raw materials, processing, distribution, packaging and technical terms.

Deng believes that Dalian, a hub for international shipping, logistics and regional finance in Northeast Asia, has the strength to lead the country in the sector.

"Dalian is the origin and main producing area of high-quality seafood such as sea cucumber, abalone, sea urchin, oyster and wakame. It is also the largest seafood distribution center in Northeast Asia, with strong cold-chain processing, storage and transportation capacity," he said.

Deng, who is also president of Dalian Rich Group, said the company is developing more ready-to-eat seafood products including turning Alaska pollock into an item with annual sales exceeding 100 million yuan (\$14.5 million).

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According to Zhu Zanbing, deputy director of the Dalian Administration for Market Regulation, there are more than 750 aquatic processing enterprises in Dalian, about 70 percent of which are able to produce precooked food.

Customs data showed that Dalian Customs supervised the export of 18,800 metric tons of precooked aquatic dishes in the first two months of this year alone.

The Dalian Premade-food Industry Association, which has more than 100 members, held its inaugural meeting on Feb 28.

"Some enterprises have gained a lot of valuable experience in both domestic and international markets. The association will help accelerate industrial integration and better growth," said Deng.

"We might incubate several influential companies in the next few years," he added.

International News

Now Available: Small Entity Compliance Guide for the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Food Traceability Rule

Today, the FDA published a [Small Entity Compliance Guide](#) for the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Food Traceability Rule. The compliance guide describes the requirements of the Food Traceability regulation to assist small entities, including farms and small businesses, in complying with the applicable

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recordkeeping requirements.

The FSMA Food Traceability Rule was issued in November 2022 and the compliance date for recordkeeping requirements is Jan. 20, 2026.

For more information about the Food Traceability Rule, visit [FSMA Final Rule on Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods](#).

For questions about the Food Traceability Rule, contact: [FSMA Technical Assistance Network](#) (TAN).

Allergen issues continue to dominate Australian recalls

Almost half of food recalls in Australia in 2022 were because of undeclared allergens but the amount declined from the previous year.

Data released by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) shows there were 75 recalls in the past year with 29 because of allergens. Other common reasons were microbial contamination and foreign matter. The overall figure is down slightly from 80 recalls in 2021.

The number of recalls because of undeclared allergens fell from 38 in 2021. Microbial-related recalls stayed almost the same while chemical contaminant and foreign matter recalls doubled.

FSANZ coordinates food recalls nationally, with the help of state enforcement agencies and businesses to get unsafe products off sale. Publishing annual data helps to identify trends and common issues in the industry and with ways to

prevent future incidents, said the agency.

Most recalls are precautionary and led by businesses to ensure that potentially unsafe food is removed from distribution and sale. However, some are linked to a suspected or confirmed illness or injury.

There are consumer and trade recalls. A trade recall is conducted when food has not been available for direct purchase by the public, such as food sold to wholesalers and caterers. A consumer recall is when it has been on retail sale.

The majority of allergen recalls were prompted by a consumer complaint or routine testing by the company.

Most recalls were due to supplier verification issues, for example, a raw ingredient contained an allergen but this information was not passed on to the manufacturer. Some were caused by packaging issues such as the wrong packaging or an incorrect ingredients list.

Trends over the years

FSANZ did not provide 2022 data on what allergen caused recalls but between 2013 and 2022 the most common ones were milk, multiple allergens, and peanut.

The main food type associated with recalls because of allergens was mixed and/or processed food. This group includes snack foods, custard powders, and frozen meals.

For microbial contamination from 2013 to 2022, the top pathogens were *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, and *E. coli*.

The most common types of foreign bodies were plastic, metal, and glass. The top chemical contaminants were classified as “other,” which includes ethylene oxide and pesticide residues, and cleaning or sanitizing agents.

FSANZ is also taking part in the University of Western Sydney’s World Food Safety Day Symposium on June 7. The event will include speakers from academia, food safety agencies, and industry. FSANZ will present the role of food standards in ensuring the supply of safe food.

UK scraps end-of-year deadline for all retained EU law

The Government in the United Kingdom has dropped plans to get rid of European laws by the end of 2023.

The Retained EU Law Bill (REUL) will be amended, removing a clause that would have scrapped any EU-derived laws that hadn’t already been replaced, repealed, or integrated into UK domestic law by December.

More than 2,400 pieces of EU legislation were kept in UK law at the end of the Brexit transition period. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) identified eight pieces of EU law that are no longer required in the UK. The regulations are known as statutory instruments.

“We have reviewed these laws in detail and are confident that removing them will not impact food safety or standards,” said the agency.

FDA Releases Draft Compliance Policy Guide on Major Food Allergen Labeling and Cross-Contact

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a [draft Compliance Policy Guide](#) to provide guidance for FDA staff on the FDA's enforcement policy regarding major food allergen labeling and cross-contact. The draft CPG more accurately reflects FDA's thinking on major food allergen enforcement policy based on the current regulatory framework and latest science. When finalized, it will replace the [existing CPG 555.250](#) for FDA staff.

Among the updates, the draft CPG describes the labeling requirements for major food allergens and the proper use of the ingredient list and the "Contains" statement for major food allergen declarations. It also describes requirements for firms to implement controls to prevent or significantly minimize allergen cross-contact. Further, the draft CPG describes additional allergen labeling violations. It also directs FDA staff to examine potential product adulteration due to allergen cross-contact as well as potential labeling violations. The updated CPG reflects the FDA's risk-based and science-based approach for the evaluation of potential allergen violations.

The FDA is aware that some manufacturers are intentionally adding sesame to products that previously did not contain sesame and are labeling the products to indicate its presence. While the draft CPG does not specifically address the issue of industry adding sesame to products that did not previously contain it, the draft CPG does address the FDA's enforcement policy for labeling and cross-contact controls for major food allergens, including sesame. The FDA is

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engaged with various stakeholders on this issue. The FDA recognizes that this practice may make it more difficult for sesame-allergic consumers to find foods that are safe for them to consume-an outcome that the FDA does not support.

To ensure that comments are received before work begins on the final version of the guidance, submit electronic or written comments within 60 days of publication in the Federal Register. Submit electronic comments to <http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments should be identified with the docket number FDA-2023-D-1103. Submit written comments to the Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

U.S. heads up Codex ciguatera efforts

The United States is to lead work on a document covering the prevention or reduction of ciguatera poisoning.

The plan was given the go-ahead at a recent Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods meeting.

An electronic working group, chaired by the U.S. and co-chaired by France, Spain, and Panama, will work on a proposed code of practice or guidelines for consideration at the next meeting of the committee in 2024.

In 2022, the committee established a working group chaired by the U.S. and co-chaired by the European Union to prepare a discussion paper on the topic.

Generally, codes of practice provide practical guidance or measures to reduce or

prevent a hazard in food, while a guideline gives higher-level principles and approaches to addressing a particular issue.

U.S. officials said that while there were still key challenges and knowledge gaps, there was wide support to start the work as ciguatera is a major public health concern.

A recent meeting was also held for Eurocigua II, the second phase of a European project on Ciguatera. Teams from Portugal, France, the Netherlands, and Germany met in the Canary Islands in April to discuss surveillance and training.

The project has 11 partners from five EU countries and experts from the United States and Japan. It also involves the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Ciguatoxins are a class of algal toxins. They enter the food chain through the consumption of Ciguatoxin-containing algae by fish and shellfish and bio-accumulate in larger predatory fish. Ciguatoxins are not destroyed by cooking, freezing, or canning processes. More than 100 species of fish have been contaminated with Ciguatoxin, including barracuda, amberjack, grouper, and parrotfish.

Ciguatera poisoning is increasing due to factors including climate change. Symptoms appear within hours of consuming contaminated food, lasting a few days. They include vomiting, diarrhea, muscle weakness, and dizziness. Some people suffer from itching, tingling, or blurred vision and others find cold things

hot and hot items cold. Ciguatera poisoning is estimated to cause between 10,000 and 50,000 illnesses per year. Additional cases go uncounted because some people do not seek medical attention or specific tests are not completed.

Other topics debated

The U.S. also requested the development of a code of practice to prevent or reduce cadmium contamination in foods but no decision was made to accept or reject this idea at the Codex meeting.

The committee heard about Brazil's work on maximum levels of lead in soft brown, raw, and non-centrifugal sugars and ready-to-eat meals for infants and young children. Work is ongoing for fresh and dried culinary herbs and dried spices.

Attendees agreed to forward a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxin contamination in cassava and cassava-based products to the next Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting.

A group chaired by India and co-chaired by Senegal is to look at the maximum levels of aflatoxin in RTE peanuts and the associated sampling plan over the next two years. China will prepare a discussion paper on tropane alkaloids for the committee's next meeting.

A decision on Indonesia's proposal to add ethylene oxide and 2-chloroethane (2-CE) to the priority list of contaminants for evaluation by JECFA was delayed until next year, so input could be requested from the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues.

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Work on maximum levels for aflatoxin in paprika, ginger, black and white pepper, and turmeric and Ochratoxin A in ginger, black and white pepper, and turmeric was discontinued due to a lack of data.

FDA Redesigns Infant Formula Resource Page

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration published a [redesigned webpage](#) to better organize content related to infant formula. The page is intended to help both consumers and industry access information more easily.

In March 2023, the FDA released an Immediate National Strategy to Increase the Resiliency of the U.S. Infant Formula Market. FDA released the strategy in response to the infant formula shortage in 2022 that was sparked by insanitary conditions at one of the nation's largest infant formula facilities, which led to a large-scale voluntary recall and a multiple-month facility shutdown. The strategy described immediate actions the FDA took to address the infant formula shortage and detailed the agency's plans for improving the resiliency of the infant formula supply, while noting multiple issues beyond the purview of the FDA.

As part of the strategy, the FDA committed to consolidating and reorganizing infant formula information on FDA.gov. The release of the redesigned resource page today is a first step toward improving accessibility of information to help parents, caregivers, and industry get the information they need about infant formula.

In addition, last week, the agency released a number of materials to help

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consumers and other stakeholders better understand *Cronobacter sakazakii*, the pathogen that has been at the center of a number of recent recalls of powdered infant formula. These materials included a blog, a new webpage, and an infographic.

The agency remains committed to the work outlined in the Immediate National Strategy and to ensuring that consumers have confidence that the formula they feed their children is safe and nutritious.

Enterprise News

Enoki mushrooms recalled in Canada after testing finds *Listeria*



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Goldenway International Trade Co. Ltd. is recalling “Golden Mushroom Enoki Mushrooms” from the marketplace because of possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.

This recall was triggered by Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) test results. The packaging does not include date information.

According to the warning posted by the CFIA, the recalled product has been sold in Ontario, Canada and may have been distributed in other provinces and territories.

Recalled products:

Brand	Product	Size	UPC	Codes
Golden Mushroom	Enoki Mushroom	200 g	8 809201 000039	CE 03 7D

Retailers and consumers should not consume, serve, use, sell or distribute recalled products.

Recalled products should be thrown out or returned to the location where they were purchased.

Gerber recalling infant formula because of *Cronobacter sakazakii* contamination



The Perrigo Company is recalling certain lots of Gerber Good Start SoothePro™ Powdered Infant Formula because of potential *Cronobacter sakazakii* contamination.

The product was distributed in the U.S. and was manufactured at the Company’s Gateway Eau Claire, WI, manufacturing facility from Jan. 2 to 18, 2023.

Associated Wholesale Grocers, Inc. (AWG) is releasing this additional notice because one of the recalled products being distributed to its Nashville Division retailers after the initial recall notice was published on March 18. The initial recall can be [found here](#).

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AWG is a cooperative food wholesaler distributing to independently owned supermarkets. This recalled product was distributed from its Nashville Division only to independent retailers located in Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia under the following retail banners: Belle Foods, Bellview Price Cutter, Booneville Shopwise, Brown County IGA, Buehler's, Buehler's Cash Saver, Buehler's IGA, Cambridge City Market, Campbell's Market, Camron's Foodliner, Cash Saver, Cash Saver Harlan, Chappell's Hometown, Country Mart, Crossroads IGA, Food City, Food Giant, Food World, Foodland, Frabergs Foods, Fresh N Low, Gallion's Market, Gregerson's Cash Saver, Hilltop Cee Bee, Hometown IGA, Houchen's, Howard's IGA, Laurel Grocery Company, Liberty IGA, Market Place, Noble's IGA, Parkview IGA, Noble's IGA, Parkview IGA, Piggly Wiggly, Piggly Wiggly Warrior, Price Cutter, Price Less Foods, Price Less IGA, Quality Foods, Riesbeck's, Rivertown IGA, Simpson's Supermarket, Spencer Cash Saver, Stop to Save, Sureway, Sureway Henderson, Swafford and Sons IGA, Tietgens Mt. Pleasant IGA, Valu Market, Versailles IGA, Vevay IGA, Village Market & Café, Walnut Creek Country Market, Winburn Fruit Market, and Woodruff's Supermarket.

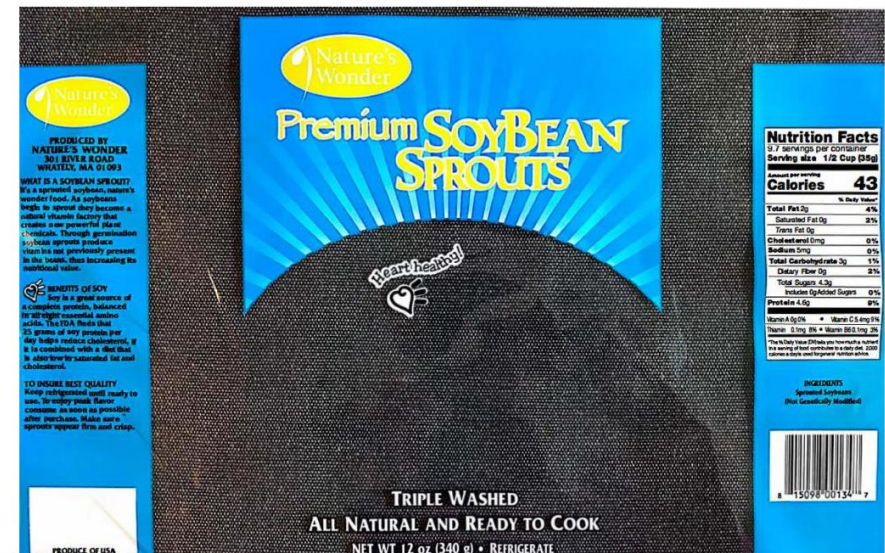
Recalled products:

- Gerber Good Start SootheProTM 12.4 oz:**
 300357651Z – USE BY 04JUL2024
 300457651Z – USE BY 05JUL2024
 300557651Z – USE BY 06JUL2024
 300557652Z – USE BY 06JUL2024

- 300757651Z – USE BY 08JUL2024
- 300857651Z – USE BY 09JUL2024
- 301057651Z – USE BY 11JUL2024
- 301057652Z – USE BY 11JUL2024
- 301157651Z – USE BY 12JUL2024

Consumers who purchased this product through these retail locations in these states are urged to check any product they may have at home. Consumers who purchased the product should look for the following Lot Codes and “use by” dates, which can be found on the bottom of the package.

Sprouts recall expanded after more testing finds Listeria contamination



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Chang Farm, of Whatley, MA, is expanding their [May 8 recall](#) to include all Mung Bean Sprouts and Soy Bean Sprouts within expiry because of possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.

The company is expanding the recall in response to a notification by the Massachusetts Food Protection Agency that a Mung Beans Sprouts sample collected on May 4, 2023, at Chang Farm by the agency tested positive for *Listeria monocytogenes*.

The initial recall was launched after a sample analysis by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' (NYSDAM) Division of Food Safety and Inspection confirmed *Listeria monocytogenes*.

The product has been distributed to retail stores and wholesalers throughout Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Rhode Island and New Jersey.

Recalled products:

- Beans Sprouts 10lb bag and bag in box
- Nature's Wonder Premium Beans Sprouts 12oz bag (UPC: 815098001330)
- Nature's Wonder Premium Soybean Sprouts 12oz bag (UPC: 815098001347)

As of the posting of this recall, no illnesses have been reported.

All retail stores and wholesalers who have this lot in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Rhode Island and New Jersey should remove this product from their



shelves. Consumers should not consume the products and should discard this product or return them to the place of purchase for a full refund.

Hepatitis A outbreak traced to organic strawberries spreads; warnings renewed



A hepatitis A outbreak traced to frozen, organic strawberries continues, as do public health warnings about the implicated products.

Although the outbreak is progressing slowly, with nine patients across three states now, public health officials are concerned that consumers may continue to face a threat. The Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are concerned that consumers may have recalled

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strawberries in their homes because of their long shelf life, which reaches into late 2024.

Based on epidemiological data collected by CDC, all nine confirmed patients reported eating frozen organic strawberries before becoming ill. There are likely unidentified infected people because some will not realize they have contracted the virus and others may not yet have symptoms. It can take up to 50 days after exposure for symptoms to develop.

In response to this investigation, California Splendor Inc. of San Diego, CA, has recalled certain lots of 4-pound bags of “Kirkland Signature Frozen Organic Whole Strawberries” that were sold at Costco stores in Los Angeles and Hawaii, and at two San Diego business centers.

Also, Scenic Fruit Company of Gresham, OR, has recalled frozen organic strawberries, sold to Costco, Aldi, KeHE, Vital Choice Seafood, and PCC Community Markets in certain states and to Trader Joe’s nationwide.

For lists of the recalled frozen organic strawberries and product photos, [click here](#).

The retailer Meijer also issued a recall for Made-With brand frozen organic strawberries from certain market store locations.

“As this investigation is ongoing, additional products may be included. More information will be provided in this advisory as it becomes available,” according to an outbreak update from the FDA.



The strawberries in question have been found to have been imported by a common supplier from certain farms located in Baja California, Mexico.

“Additionally, the strain of hepatitis A virus causing illnesses this year is genetically identical to the strain that caused the outbreak of hepatitis A virus infections in 2022, which was linked to fresh organic strawberries imported from Baja California, Mexico, and sold at various retailers,” the FDA reported.

MARKET NEWS - REPLY

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