

MARKET February 2025 NEWS



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Focus on China

Chinese prosecutors continue protecting food, drug safety

BEIJING -- China's top procuratorate has vowed to maintain a tough stance against crimes related to food and drug safety, focusing on online platforms and livestreaming sales.

Du Xueyi, a senior prosecutor with the Supreme People's Procuratorate, made the remarks on Thursday while introducing the SPP's effort to combat crimes related to this issue.

In the first 11 months of 2024, procuratorial agencies nationwide indicted 12,987 suspects, including 5,727 suspects of drug-related crimes and 7,260 charged with harming food safety, according to Du.

Du added that in March 2024, the SPP launched a special campaign to crack down on manufacturing and selling counterfeit or shoddy products, especially offenses involving online marketing and livestreaming sales that affect people's lives.

Crimes related to food and drug safety are one of the focuses of law enforcement authorities' acts to safeguard the public interest.

According to a separate SPP statement, the SPP has initiated an operation to supervise public interest litigations to target problems with food and drug safety to the people's concern.

The operation will strengthen procuratorial oversight over 10 key areas, including illegal food additives, agricultural products and medical devices. It will last until October, the SPP said.

Campaign to enhance food and drug safety launched by prosecutors

A campaign to strengthen food and drug safety has been launched by prosecutors across China, with a focus on 10 key sectors, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the country's top procuratorate, announced on Saturday.

The campaign, which will end in October, will closely monitor food and drug safety issues that have received most complaints by the public, and plans to encourage prosecutors to resolve the problems through public interest litigation, according to the SPP.

It urged prosecutors nationwide to attach greater importance to issues in the sectors of food additives, drinking water, edible agricultural products, food sold online, and catering safety in specific venues.

Tea industry, medical devices, and operation of community hospitals and rural health clinics will also be major targets of the campaign, it said.

Data released by the SPP showed that from November to January, Chinese prosecutors solved 4,044 cases of food and drug safety

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through public interest litigation to protect people's health safety and regulate the industrial development.

China extends anti-dumping duties on EU potato starch

BEIJING -- China's Ministry of Commerce will extend anti-dumping duties levied on potato starch imported from the European Union (EU) for another five years, starting Thursday.

If anti-dumping measures are terminated, the dumping of imported potato starch from the EU may continue or recur, potentially causing ongoing or renewed harm to China's potato starch industry, the ministry said.

China first imposed anti-dumping duties on imported potato starch from the EU in 2007, with the duties lasting five years. On April 18, 2011, the country announced an adjustment of the anti-dumping duty rates to between 12.6 percent and 56.7 percent.

Potato starch is widely used in the food industry to make industrial materials, such as emulsifiers, as well as food products, such as instant noodles.

Safety stressed in resumption of Japan's seafood imports

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said on Thursday that the final resumption of Japanese aquatic product imports should be based on a series of scientific data and effective measures taken by

Japan to ensure the quality and safety of fishery products exported to China.

The independent sampling and testing of seawater near the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant is just one step toward Japan fulfilling its commitments, Mao told a regular news conference.

Chinese research institutions recently completed the first independent testing and analysis of seawater collected near Fukushima following Japan's unilateral decision to release nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean on Aug 24, 2023.

The tests detected no abnormalities in hazardous elements such as tritium, cesium-137, and strontium-90, according to the China Atomic Energy Authority, or CAEA.

The International Atomic Energy Agency's laboratory analysis and comparison activities are still ongoing, and the test data from laboratories in various countries will be released later, the CAEA said on Thursday.

Emphasizing that the results of this independent sampling and testing only reflect the radiological levels of the marine environment "at a specific time and location", the CAEA said China would keep working with the international community and relevant professional organizations to make every effort to avoid the negative impacts of the ocean discharge on human health and the environment, and prevent irreversible consequences resulting from the discharge.

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Mao, the spokeswoman, emphasized that the results of a single test are insufficient to verify the long-term safety of the discharge and reiterated that China's opposition to the ocean discharge remains unchanged.

"Japan's unilateral ocean discharge disregards the concerns of neighboring countries and the international community," Mao said. "Such actions lack legitimacy and reasonableness."

Japan announced in September its support for a long-term international monitoring arrangement under the IAEA framework, which would allow stakeholders, including China, to conduct independent sampling and monitoring as well as inter-laboratory comparisons.

"China will work with the international community to ensure strict oversight of the discharge and continue independent sampling and monitoring," Mao said.

As the Chinese government has always put people first and remains committed to safeguarding food safety, Mao said China will maintain a scientific approach regarding the resumption of Japanese seafood imports.

Xiang Haoyu, a research fellow at the China Institute of International Studies' Department for Asia-Pacific Studies, cautioned that a single test cannot draw a conclusion and the potential risks of the



Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water, some of which may exceed current scientific understanding.

He called on Japan to prioritize ecological and public health, address stakeholders' concerns, and enhance transparency to build international trust.

"To win the confidence of the global community, Japan must strengthen oversight of discharge operations, ensure the safety of related equipment and processes, and improve information sharing," he added.

International News

Norway reports largest outbreak in decades with 230 sick; sprouts blamed

Norway has reported its largest foodborne outbreak in almost 50 years with 230 people sick.

The Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI) said 105 people are infected with *Salmonella* Newport and 120 with *Salmonella* Typhimurium. The remaining five are infected with other types of *Salmonella*.

Patients became ill from mid-October to mid-December 2024. They range in age from less than 1 to 90 years old with a median age of 47.5

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years old. A total of 159 patients are women and 76 people have been hospitalized.

Sick people live in different parts of the country but Vestland has the most patients with more than 70.

Seeds from Italian supplier

Umaer Naseer, acting section head of infection control and emergency preparedness at FHI, said there has been a large increase in sick people from when the agency last reported on the outbreak in December 2024 when 49 people were ill.

“This is not unexpected as it takes time from sampling of those who have become ill to the final results of the laboratory analyses. Most of the infected people became ill in the period between November and December 2024, around the time of the withdrawal of organic alfalfa sprouts.”

In November 2024, organic alfalfa sprouts were withdrawn from the market by Norske Spirer because of suspected Salmonella contamination. Seeds used in sprout production came from a large Italian company, which also supplied other EU countries.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (Mattilsynet) and Norwegian Veterinary Institute have detected the same type of Salmonella in sprouts that the lab at FHI found in patients.

“This is one of the largest Salmonella outbreaks linked to a food product we have had in Norway, at least since the 1980s, when chocolate made over 300 people sick,” said Lindis Folkvord, section manager for biological food safety at the Norwegian Food Safety Authority.

Sweden had related outbreak

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority interviewed patients, obtained purchase information and looked at the distribution pattern of products. Samples of sprouts were taken at the company and from individuals who fell ill. Samples were also taken in the production premises.

The Norwegian Veterinary Institute detected Salmonella Newport in sprouts and in the production environment at a sprout producer.

Sweden also reported a large outbreak linked to alfalfa sprouts from the Italian supplier. From August to November 2024, 100 people from 18 regions fell ill with one of 14 genetically closely related bacterial variants of Salmonella Typhimurium sequence type 36. Of the cases, 65 were women and 35 were men. They ranged in age from 1 to 89 years old with a median of 43 years old.

In Finland, Salmonella Kisarawe was detected in sprouts from Italy but was not found in patients that had consumed the sprouts. These three people were infected by Salmonella Typhimurium. The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) said it did not know yet

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if cases were linked to patients in other countries but it was investigating the situation.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) are working with authorities in Norway and other EU countries to investigate measures that should be taken to prevent similar outbreaks in the future.

Enterprise News

Date snacks recalled in Canada because of Salmonella contamination

A recall of date square snacks is underway in Canada because the products have been found to be contaminated with Salmonella.

The Palm Bites brand date squares are packaged in plastic bags with three squares per bag. The products do not have UPC numbers. Consumers should look for the following production date on both the plain and the chocolate versions of the products: “from 24/OC/08 to 25/FE/14.”

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) reports that the products were sold online and distributed in Ontario, with distribution in other provinces possible.

The recall was triggered by a CFIA investigation. The date square recall is in relation to a previous [recall of tahini products](#).

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Tuna recalled from Costco, Trader Joe's, Walmart and more retailers because of potential for botulism poisoning

Tri-Union Seafoods recalling select lots of canned tuna products sold under the Genova, Van Camp's, H-E-B and Trader Joe's brand names because they may become contaminated with botulism.

This voluntary recall comes after the supplier of the tuna reported that the pull tab can lid on limited products have a manufacturing defect that may compromise the integrity of the product seal, causing it to leak, or worse, be contaminated with clostridium botulinum, a potentially fatal form of food poisoning.

Consumers are warned not to use the product even if it does not look or smell spoiled. Consumers feeling unwell should seek immediate medical attention. No illnesses associated with the recalled products had been reported as of Feb. 7.

The impacted products were distributed to retail stores as follows:

- H-E-B label – Texas
- Trader Joe's label – Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C., and Wisconsin
- Genova 7 oz. – Costco in Florida and Georgia

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- Genova 5 oz. – Harris Teeter, Publix, H-E-B, Kroger, Safeway, Walmart, and independent retailers in Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Texas
- Van Camp's label – Walmart and independent retailers in Pennsylvania, Florida and New Jersey

Recalled products include specific can codes and Best if Used By dates indicated on the bottom of the cans, and UPC numbers.

For a complete list of the products included in this recall, [click here](#).

If you have a recalled tuna can, please return it to the retailer for a full refund, throw it away, or contact Tri-Union Seafoods directly for a retrieval kit and a coupon for a replacement product.

Consumers can contact Tri-Union Seafoods at support@thaiunionhelp.zendesk.com or 833-374-0171, if they have any questions or to request replacement product.



Almost 3 tons of pet food recalled after state test shows Salmonella contamination

Blue Ridge Beef is recalling 5,700 pounds of their 2-pound log Natural Mix because of contamination with Salmonella.

Lot number N25/12/31 is stamped in the clips on the end of the chubs/bags. The recalled food is marked with UPC 854298001054.

Salmonella can affect animals eating the products and there is risk to humans from handling contaminated pet products, especially if they have not thoroughly washed their hands after having contact with the products or any surfaces exposed to these products.

Pets with Salmonella infections may be lethargic and have diarrhea or bloody diarrhea, fever, and vomiting. Some pets will have only decreased appetite, fever, and abdominal pain. Infected but otherwise healthy pets can be carriers and infect other animals or humans.

If your pet has consumed the recalled product and has these symptoms, please contact your veterinarian.

Samples of the product were collected on Jan. 8 by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and tested by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture Food and Drug Protection Laboratory. The product tested positive for Salmonella.

On Jan. 27 the firm was notified by the FDA that the product tested positive for Salmonella.

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The products were distributed from Jan. 3 to Jan. 24. The product is packaged in clear plastic and sold primarily in retail stores in the states of: Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York State, Tennessee, Rhode Island.

Consumers who have purchased this product are urged to return to place of purchase or destroy the food in a way that children, pets, and wildlife cannot access. Do not sell or donate the recalled products. Do not feed the recalled product to pets or any other animals.

Wash and sanitize pet food bowls, cups, and storage containers. Always ensure you wash and sanitize your hands after handling recalled food or any utensils that come in contact with recalled food. For more information contact blueridgebeefnc@yahoo.com or call 704-873-2072.

MARKET NEWS - REPLY

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