

MARKET NEWS

May 2026



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MÉRIEUX NUTRISCIENCES CHINA

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Focus on China

Tariff cuts drive Gansu chili powder into US market

Chili powder produced in Jiuquan, Gansu province, is gaining traction abroad as tariff adjustments and rising demand help Chinese exporters expand their foothold in the United States market.

From January to April, Gansu Xinong Food Technology exported 37.49 million yuan (\$5.5 million) worth of chili powder to the US, up 627 percent year-on-year, according to Jiuquan Customs.

Industry insiders attributed the sharp growth partly to US trade policy changes. In November 2025, the United States removed so-called "reciprocal" tariffs on 237 categories of imported goods, including chili powder, reducing export costs for Chinese food-processing companies.

"The tariff adjustment has made our products much more price-competitive in the US market," said Wei Sitian, manager of the company, adding that negotiations are underway with several American food firms.

To meet rising demand, the company has invested 250 million yuan in a new chili-processing industrial park in Jiuquan, designed as a major base for processing, exports, and warehousing.

The company said international demand has expanded beyond major food manufacturers to seasoning producers and catering supply-chain firms, driven partly by growing orders from Chinese restaurants abroad.

Wei said the products comply with strict European Union standards on pesticide residues and food safety, helping them gain wider international recognition.

Customs authorities have introduced measures to support exports, including guidance on US Food and Drug Administration regulations and a WeChat-based platform providing updated foreign trade requirements.

Authorities destroy 540kg of tainted Chinese bayberry, detaining five suspects in Fujian

Authorities in Zhangzhou, East China's Fujian province, have seized and destroyed 540 kilograms of tainted *yangmei*, also known as Chinese bayberry, and detained five suspects, according to an official statement released by the city's food safety authorities on Wednesday.

The enforcement action followed a May 15 media report exposing the illegal use of chemical additives at several *yangmei* collection points in Fugong and Baishui, two towns under the jurisdiction of Zhangzhou's Longhai district.

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Following the exposure, Zhangzhou authorities dispatched a joint task force to the affected areas. The crackdown has resulted in 12 administrative cases and two criminal cases. Law enforcement officers also confiscated 20.1 kg of illicit additives.

In response to the incident, Zhangzhou has initiated a 45-day intensive food safety campaign to cover the entire peak harvest and marketing season of the fruit. Officials have been deployed to monitor all local collection points, enforcing a strict supervision protocol from purchasing to storage and final sales, according to the statement.

Yangmei is a vital agricultural pillar for the local economy. Longhai district accounts for about 70 percent of Zhangzhou's *yangmei* output and half of Fujian's total production. *Yangmei* in Fugong township of the district is recognized as a national geographical indication product.

China cranks up heat on counterfeits, IP violations

China has intensified its nationwide campaign against counterfeit and pirated goods, the country's top market regulator said on Friday, unveiling a sweeping enforcement record.

The move also came as the country seeks to bolster intellectual property right protection and underpin its drive toward innovation.

The State Administration for Market Regulation released its annual report on combating IPR infringement and counterfeiting ahead of the 26th World Intellectual Property Day.

According to the report, China handled 12,800 cases of piracy and infringement in physical markets last year, while customs officials seized 282,000 batches of suspected infringing imports and exports, totaling about 400 million items.

Market regulators investigated 218,900 cases involving trademark violations and patent counterfeiting, and for a fifth consecutive year carried out coordinated nationwide destruction campaigns targeting fake and substandard goods.

Bai Qingyuan, deputy head of the SAMR, said that enforcement has become more targeted, focusing on key sectors, products and distribution channels. In 2025 alone, regulators handled 37,000 infringement-related cases, involving 677 million yuan (\$99 million), and transferred 1,130 cases to judicial authorities for criminal prosecution.

"Stronger IP protection is reinforcing China's capacity for innovation," he emphasized.

China's progress has been mirrored in global rankings. According to the World Intellectual Property Organization, China broke into the world's top 10 global innovation index for the first time, maintaining its lead among middle-income economies.

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The SAMR also highlighted rising challenges from the rapid expansion of online commerce, particularly livestream shopping, which has created new channels for counterfeit goods.

The regulator said it is tightening oversight of platform-based businesses, strengthening institutional frameworks and stepping up routine supervision of the digital marketplace.

Last week, the SAMR fined seven major e-commerce and food delivery platforms a combined total of 3.59 billion yuan for violations related to "ghost kitchen" operations in one of the country's largest enforcement actions regarding online food safety.

Ghost kitchens are unqualified food preparation facilities that produce meals exclusively for delivery and have no dine-in seating for customers.

The SAMR penalized Pinduoduo, Meituan, JD, Alibaba-backed delivery service Ele.me, short video platform Douyin, as well as Taobao and Tmall, for failing to properly vet food vendors operating on their platforms.

The sanction also includes an additional 19.69 million yuan in personal fines levied on the seven companies' legal representatives and food safety executives for failing to fully discharge their management responsibilities.

International News

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FDA Publishes Final Guidance on Protein Quality Studies for Infant Formula

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued [final guidance](#) for manufacturers of infant formula and laboratories conducting testing on infant formula. The guidance was developed to help manufacturers and laboratories in the design, conduct, evaluation, and reporting of Protein Efficiency Ratio (PER) studies. Protein is an essential nutrient to support growth and development in infants. PER studies are used to assure the quality of the protein in the infant formula, which is often a sole source of nutrition for infants. The guidance is intended to help industry, particularly those looking to introduce new infant formula to the U.S. market, by outlining how the PER study can be conducted to meet FDA's requirement that a new infant formula meets the quality factor of sufficient biological quality of protein.

This document finalizes the approach presented in the draft guidance issued in 2023.

This guidance is one of many steps FDA is taking to support a more resilient infant formula supply by providing manufacturers with information to help with their new infant formula submissions to FDA. Manufacturers and laboratories are encouraged to review the guidance and may contact the Infant Formula Premarket Review Staff (if_manufacturer_questions@fda.hhs.gov) with questions or to request protocol review and feedback before initiating PER studies.

FDA Releases Results from Largest-Ever Testing of Infant Formula in the U.S.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today announced [results](#) from the largest and most rigorous examination ever conducted focused on chemical contaminants in infant formula available on the U.S. market. While breast milk is widely considered the gold standard and optimal source of nutrition for infants whenever possible, millions of parents depend on formula.

“We tested more infant formula than ever before, and the results are clear: most products meet a high safety standard—but even small exposures matter for newborns,” **said Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** “We will hold manufacturers accountable, and give parents honest, transparent data they can trust. Protecting our children’s health is nonnegotiable.”

“You can judge a society by how it treats its most vulnerable members. That’s why we’re doing everything in our power to make sure our babies and infants have safe, high quality formula options that are backed by a resilient supply chain,” **said FDA Commissioner Marty Makary, M.D., M.P.H.** “The results of this study are encouraging. We will continue to advance formula innovation and safety for the millions of families who depend on it.”

Across the products tested, an overwhelming majority of samples had undetectable or very low levels of contaminants, affirming that the

U.S. infant formula supply is safe. The FDA tested more than 300 infant formula samples representative of products sold at retail across the U.S.—generating more than 120,000 data points—for lead, mercury, cadmium, arsenic, pesticides (including glyphosate and glufosinate), per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and phthalates. The samples, which included powders, ready-to-feed liquids, and concentrated liquids, were rigorously tested and analyzed in FDA laboratories.

While overall levels of contaminants in the infant formula samples tested were low, the FDA is following up with additional testing as part of the agency’s ongoing robust monitoring and oversight efforts and will take additional action where appropriate. This includes conducting further testing, including for additional contaminants, continuing to engage with manufacturers on measures to reduce the levels of contaminants to as low as possible, and working to establish action levels for contaminants in infant formula.

“As a father, I understand how important it is for parents to trust the safety of the food they give their children. At the FDA, ensuring the health of America’s next generation is vital,” **said Kyle Diamantas, J.D., Deputy Commissioner for Deputy Commissioner for Food.** “Through Operation Stork Speed and our Closer to Zero initiative, this testing—the first of its kind—reinforces that infant formula in the U.S. is a safe option for parents and caregivers who rely on it. We will

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continue working to drive contaminants to as low as possible through rigorous oversight.”

Small amounts of contaminants may be present in foods—including infant formula and breast milk—because they occur naturally or enter the environment through human activities in the areas where ingredients are grown or produced.

This testing was conducted as part of [Operation Stork Speed](#), the FDA’s [Closer to Zero](#) initiative, and the FDA’s routine food surveillance work to help ensure safe, reliable, and nutritious infant formula for families across the U.S.

The FDA will continue to test infant formula as part of Operation Stork Speed and ongoing surveillance of foods, including testing infant formula products that have entered the U.S. market since this initial survey began and conducting additional compliance sampling. Consistent with FDA’s commitment to transparency, the agency will share results from follow-up surveys.

Secretary Kennedy will host chief executives from leading infant formula companies in May for a roundtable discussion focused on modernizing FDA’s infant formula oversight and continued implementation of Operation Stork Speed, which includes aspects of nutrition, chemical, and microbiological food safety.

Enterprise News



Organic ice cream recalled because of metal pieces

Straus Family Creamery is recalling a number of production runs of select flavors and sizes of its Organic Ice Cream because of the potential presence of metal foreign material.

The implicated lots were distributed to retailers in seventeen states: AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, MD, NJ, OR, PA, SC, TX, WA, and WI. It was on shelves beginning May 4.

The FDA has been informed of this recall, and Straus Family Creamery is working with retailers to remove the affected products from shelves.

No injuries have been reported.

Consumers who have purchased the recalled product are urged to discard the product.

The recalled ice cream is packaged in paper cups with a seal and lid, in quart and pint sizes. It is labeled as Straus Family Creamery Organic Super Premium Ice Cream.

Consumers can use the following label information to determine whether they have the recalled ice cream in their homes:

PRODUCT	CONTAINER SIZE	BEST BY DATE	UPC
Ice Cream Vanilla	Pint	23-Dec-2026	7-84830-10030-6

PRODUCT	CONTAINER SIZE	BEST BY DATE	UPC
Bean		28-Dec-2026	7-84830-10030-6
Ice Cream Strawberry	Quart	24-Dec-2026	7-84830-10097-9
Ice Cream Strawberry	Pint	25-Dec-2026	7-84830-10095-5
Ice Cream Cookie Dough	Pint	26-Dec-2026	7-84830-10104-4
Ice Cream Dutch Chocolate	Quart	27-Dec-2026	7-84830-10012-2
Ice Cream Mint Chip	Pint	30-Dec-2026	7-84830-10050-4

Kimchi recalled because of undeclared fish

Ocinet Inc. of Downey, CA, is recalling all “...And Kimchi” branded sliced kimchi, UPC 8541200408, UPC 8541200409, and UPC 8541200411 because it contains undeclared fish (anchovies).

People who have an allergy or severe sensitivity to fish run the risk of a serious or life-threatening allergic reaction if they consume this product.

The recalled product was distributed to six retail locations:

- Zion Market - 8330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., San Diego, CA 92111
- Zion Market - 4800 Irvine Blvd, Irvine, CA, 92620
- Zion Market - 750 S Oxford Ave, Los Angeles, CA, 90005
- Zion Market - 5400 Beach Blvd., Buena Park, CA, 90621
- Zion Market - 2340 Pleasant Hill Rd., Duluth, GA, 30096
- Zion Market - 2405 S Stemmons Fwy, Lewisville, TX, 75067

The product is sold in 126-ounce (3.57 kilogram) clear plastic jars, 63-ounce (1.78 kilogram) clear plastic jars, and 30-ounce (850 gram) clear plastic jars, all marked with the “... And Kimchi” logo in red type.

The UPC numbers are 8541200408 (126-ounce jars), 8651200409 (63-ounce jars), and 8541200411 (30-ounce jars).

No illnesses have been reported as of the posting of the recall notice.

The recall was initiated after it was discovered that the product was distributed in packaging that did not reveal the presence of fish. Distribution of the product has been suspended until the company is certain that the problem has been corrected.

Salmonella outbreak spreads across Europe

A multi-country outbreak of Salmonella has sickened 50 people with suspicions again falling on sprout seeds from Italy.

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According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the outbreak is affecting at least six European countries and the United Kingdom.

Ireland, Finland and the UK have reported 50 patients infected with genetically closely related bacterial isolates of *Salmonella Bovismorbificans* from January to April 2026.

All cases are adults and the majority are female. At least five people have been hospitalized.

First report from Finland

Patients have no recorded travel history and outbreak investigations in all three countries point to the consumption of sprouted seeds of different sorts.

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) and Finnish Food Authority (Ruokavirasto) previously reported 32 people were sick in Finland. The average age of patients was 45 and the range was 17 to 77 years old. In total, 23 patients were women.

In the UK and Ireland, specific batches of Good4U Super Sprouts Super Greens were recalled because of the possible presence of *Salmonella*. The affected sprouts come in a 60-gram packs with dates of April 22, 26, 29 and 30 as well as May 3, 2026.

A total of 15 infections have been identified in England and Wales since January 2026.

Amy Douglas, lead epidemiologist at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), said: "We are working closely with public health agencies to investigate an international *Salmonella* outbreak which has been linked to consumption of sprouted seeds.

"Investigations into the source of the contamination are ongoing, however the risk to the UK public is low given a voluntary recall has been initiated for the affected product. If you have bought the recalled product, please do not eat it. If you have handled the recalled sprouted seeds you should wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water and clean any contaminated kitchen utensils."

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland and the HSE National Health Protection Office are investigating the international outbreak. These investigations have linked illness to the consumption of sprouted seeds. There have been three confirmed cases of *Salmonella Bovismorbificans* in Ireland.

Four other countries have identified 10 cases with closely related isolates of *Salmonella Bovismorbificans* in the same period and another country reported a slight increase in infections with this *Salmonella* serotype. Food and travel exposures are not yet available with investigations ongoing.

According to a Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) alert, the suspected sources are alfalfa seeds, clover seeds, broccoli seeds and radish seeds from Italy.

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Past problems

A Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG Sante) audit in May and June 2025 in Italy found sprouted seeds being produced by unregistered companies and a lack of enforcement by authorities.

In response to the findings, Italian officials said more detail would be included in regional databases on the activities performed by operators, with specific reference to seed producers. This would help improve the planning of risk-based controls.

From 2023 to 2025, a major outbreak linked to sprouted seeds had 509 confirmed cases in 10 countries. The focus was North Europe with 94 cases in Finland, 110 in Sweden, and 257 in Norway. The incident involved eight *Salmonella* serotypes but not *Salmonella* Bovismorbificans.

Epidemiological investigations, including whole genome sequencing and food tracing, pointed to a supplier in Italy which sourced seeds from three growers in the same region.

FDA issues alert about blood clams in relation to hepatitis A outbreak

An outbreak of hepatitis A has spurred the FDA to issue a public alert about fresh-frozen blood clams imported from Ecuador and sold under the La Serranita brand.

The outbreak is under investigation by the New York State Department of Health and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The first illness related to the clams was reported in July 2025, with the most recent case of hepatitis A being reported in February this year. The threat is ongoing because of the long shelf life of the frozen blood clams, which are also referred to as concha negra (black shell) shell meat.

The implicated clam meat was shipped to a New York dealer from a New Jersey dealer/importer and distributed within New York state. The product may have been further distributed.

Consumers can use the following label information to determine whether they have the implicated clams:

- La Serranita
- Concha Negra
- Shell Meat
- Fresh Frozen
- Net Weight 16 oz (454 g)

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