MARKET NEWS

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Focus on China

Driscoll's reassures Chinese consumers after US lawsuit sparks food safety concerns

Berry producer Driscoll's sought to reassure Chinese consumers on Tuesday after allegations linked to a United States lawsuit over pesticide residues sparked widespread concern online and prompted some retailers in China to remove the company's products from their shelves.

The controversy trended on Chinese social media after reports that consumers from several US states had filed a lawsuit against Driscoll's, one of the world's largest berry producers. The lawsuit cites an independent testing report by US consumer advocacy group Mamavation, which said it detected residues of 12 pesticides on Driscoll's strawberries, including eight that it claimed were associated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS.

The lawsuit accuses the company of greenwashing by marketing its products as environmentally friendly despite the alleged findings. Driscoll's US office has rejected the allegations.

PFAS are a large group of synthetic chemicals known for their persistence in the environment, earning them the nickname "forever chemicals" because they degrade very slowly once released into soil or water.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the World Health Organization, has classified perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA, one of the most widely studied PFAS compounds, as carcinogenic to humans, while perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, or PFOS, is classified as possibly carcinogenic to humans.

Studies have also linked certain PFAS compounds to thyroid disorders, liver damage and weakened immune function.

The online discussion quickly spread to China. Products from Driscoll's were no longer available through the online stores of some retailers, including Sam's Club. Freshippo, Alibaba's grocery chain, continued to sell Driscoll's blueberries but no longer listed its strawberries.

Driscoll's official flagship stores on Chinese e-commerce platforms, however, continued to sell strawberries and other berries. Customer service representatives at the flagship stores said the berries sold in China are primarily sourced from Yunnan province and comply with Chinese laws and food safety standards.

In a statement posted on Tuesday afternoon on its official Sina Weibo account, Driscoll's China office said products sold in the Chinese market are unrelated to the facts, parties or legal disputes involved in the US lawsuit.

The company said it believes the allegations in the lawsuit lack both factual and legal merit and that it will defend its legitimate rights and reputation through legal proceedings.

It also said Driscoll's berries continue to be sold normally around the world and that, in response to public concern, it had increased sampling and testing of products sold in China. According to the company, all test results comply with China's national food safety standards.

Authorities in Luohe, Henan, investigate firms for falsely labeling NFC juice

Following media reports on Tuesday claiming that some NFC juice is not created by pressing or squeezing fruit, the government of Luohe, Henan province, has launched an investigation into five local beverage enterprises, according to a report by Henan Daily on Friday.

Shortly after the case drew widespread public attention, Luohe mobilized sub-district authorities, market supervision bureaus, and public security departments to conduct on-site inspections at the five implicated manufacturers.

Preliminary investigations confirmed that two companies, Henan Zanyang Beverages and Luohe Shennong Biotechnology, were suspected of false labeling on their product packages. Law enforcement agencies have filed formal cases against the two enterprises and ordered them to immediately pull all non-compliant products off shelves nationwide and recall all defective goods already sold to consumers.

Investigations into the remaining three involved manufacturers are still underway. Any illegal acts confirmed in the follow-up probe will be penalized strictly in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.

A senior official from Luohe's food safety office stated that a city-wide special rectification campaign targeting beverage manufacturers and other food sectors would be rolled out. The city intends to adopt a zero-tolerance policy against false labeling and any acts that infringe on consumers' legitimate rights and interests, the official said, adding that all violations would be thoroughly investigated and severely punished without leniency.

According to earlier media reports, on-site undercover media visits to multiple contract factories in Henan found no fruit and fresh pressing equipment in some workshops. The so-called fresh fruit cold pressed juice was made entirely by blending water and concentrated raw pulp.

Royal Canin's Shanghai facility becomes world's first pet food lighthouse

France-based pet health and nutrition company Royal Canin's Shanghai manufacturing plant was named to the World Economic Forum's Global Lighthouse Network with Distinction in Customer

Centricity on Monday, making it the first Mars facility — and the first pet food site worldwide — to receive the honor.

The Global Lighthouse Network benchmarks the world's most advanced manufacturing and supply chain operations. The Distinction in Customer Centricity recognizes technological breakthroughs in customized production and delivery efficiency, with only eight enterprises selected globally in the latest cohort.

"The newest Lighthouse sites show how intelligence is becoming embedded into the fabric of operations, enabling organizations to respond faster, learn continuously, and unlock new levels of performance across their value chains," Kiva Allgood, managing director of the World Economic Forum, said.

The Shanghai plant has deployed more than 40 advanced solutions across its end-to-end value chain. In partnership with the Academy of National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration, it runs a satellite-powered model to predict wheat mycotoxin risks one month before harvest. AI-optimized drying processes reduce energy consumption and improve product consistency, while its "Smart Eye" data control tower streamlines nationwide distribution.

These digital upgrades have cut in-line defects by 70 percent and maintained service levels above 98 percent.

Operational since 2010, the plant follows unified global manufacturing standards with a clean record of zero food safety incidents and zero microbial non-compliance. It has also retained Mars' highest rating for 820 consecutive weeks.

Royal Canin entered China in 1995. Xu Juan, general manager of Royal Canin China, described the designation as a new starting point. The company will build on the Shanghai plant's benchmark role to scale up digital expertise and broaden technology application via its Shanghai-Tianjin dual-facility layout to advance high-quality development of China's pet industry.

International News

FDA Takes Further Steps to Remove Outdated Authorizations for Color Additives in Food

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today announced two actions targeting petroleum-based color additives in food, continuing the agency's broader efforts to Make America Healthy Again. The FDA is issuing a final order revoking the authorized use of Orange B as a color additive in food and is proposing to revoke the authorized use of Citrus Red No. 2 as a color additive in food.

"The Trump Administration is taking decisive action to strengthen the safety of America's food supply," **said Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** "By working to eliminate outdated authorizations for petroleum-based color additives that are no longer

used, we are modernizing our food safety regulations and helping to Make America Healthy Again."

The FDA is proposing to revoke the regulation authorizing the use of Citrus Red No. 2 as a color additive in food because the agency has tentatively concluded that its use has been abandoned by industry. Citrus Red No. 2 has been authorized since 1959 for coloring the skins of mature oranges.

"The FDA is committed to maintaining a science-based, modern regulatory framework that reflects current manufacturing practices and marketplace realities," **said Acting FDA Commissioner Kyle Diamantas, J.D.** "By working to remove outdated and unnecessary authorizations under President Trump's regulatory reform agenda, we are ensuring our regulations remain effective, transparent, and aligned with the agency's public health mission."

The FDA is also issuing a final order revoking the regulation authorizing the use of Orange B as a color additive in food. Following an evaluation of public comments on the proposed action, the agency did not receive information that changed its conclusion that the authorized use of Orange B has been abandoned by industry.

The FDA is accepting public comments on the proposed revocation of Citrus Red No. 2 as a color additive in food for 30 days. All comments must be submitted by August 24, 2026. Comments may be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal to docket **FDA-2026-N-6304**, or by mail to:

Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

After reviewing the public comments, the FDA will determine whether to finalize the proposed revocation of Citrus Red No. 2.

These actions reflect the FDA's ongoing commitment to reviewing and updating color additive regulations that are no longer relevant to current industry practices and represent significant milestones in the Administration's broader effort to phase out petroleum-based color additives from the U.S. food supply. The FDA also continues to track voluntary industry commitments to remove petroleum-based food dyes from the food supply through its Tracking Food Industry Pledges to Remove Petroleum-Based Food Dyes webpage, which summarizes commitments from manufacturers, retailers, and trade associations as companies transition to alternative color sources and phase out petroleum-based food dyes.

FDA investigating 3 new outbreaks

The Food and Drug Administration is investigating three new outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. The outbreaks involve the Cyclospora parasite, Salmonella and Listeria.

For the Cyclospora outbreak, the FDA reports there are 72 patients. The outbreak apparently is not part of a larger 34-state Cyclospora outbreak being investigated by the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For the new Cyclospora outbreak, the FDA reports that a specific source of the parasite has not been identified. The agency is not reporting where the patients live. The FDA has begun traceback efforts, but is not reporting what food is being traced. For the larger outbreak, which has sickened thousands, the FDA has identified iceberg lettuce products produced by Taylor Farms as the source.

For the new outbreak of Salmonella Javiana infections, the FDA is reporting 106 confirmed patients. The agency is not reporting the patients' ages or where they live. The FDA has begun traceback efforts but is not reporting what food it is tracing.

For the new outbreak of Listeria monocytogenes infections, the FDA is reporting eight confirmed patients. The agency is not reporting the patients' ages or where they live. The FDA has begun traceback and onsite inspections but is not reporting what food is being traced or what location is being inspected.

In other news, the FDA is reporting that the patient count for another Cyclospora outbreak has increased from eight to 10 patients. The agency is not reporting the patients' ages or where they live. The FDA has begun traceback efforts but is not reporting what food it is tracing. The agency first reported the outbreak on July 8.

For outbreaks of Salmonella Oranienburg and Salmonella Enteritidis the patient counts have increased from 69 to 81 patients and from 91 to 96 patients, respectively. The source of the outbreaks has not been determined.

For the Salmonella Oranienburg outbreak, first reported on July 8, the FDA has begun traceback efforts but has not revealed what food it is tracing.

For the outbreak of Salmonella Enteritidis infections, first reported June 10, the FDA has initiated traceback, onsite inspection and testing but it is not reporting what food is being traced, what location is being inspected, or what is being tested.

FDA Advises Human and Animal Food Facilities to Protect their Food Facility Registration Information

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is reminding businesses that it is important they register their food facilities with the FDA only when required and to protect their Food Facility Registration (FFR) information from potential misuse.

The FDA has become aware of a number of issues regarding when registration is required and potential misuse of FFR, including:

- An uptick in businesses registering their facilities with the FDA when they are not required to.
- Third-party businesses or "registrars" requesting FFR number, PIN, FIS-FURLS username, and/or FIS-FURLS password to verify registration status.
- The TikTok Shop and other third-party seller platforms asking food companies to provide a copy of their FDA Food Facility Registration, or a certificate, as part of their product-listing process.

The above issues can create problems for both these businesses and for the FDA, including:

- Security Risks: Having an FFR number when you don't need one, and then sharing it with third-party platforms, creates opportunities for bad actors to misuse your registration information for fraudulent purposes. When you provide your FFR number and PIN (or username and password), these entities can link your FFR to their own FIS-FURLS accounts. Once linked, they can view, change, or even cancel your FFR. To check your FFR status always use the official FDA website here.
- Regulatory Confusion: Registering when exempt or otherwise not required to may subject your facility to unnecessary inspections or create confusion about your compliance obligations.
- Straining FDA Resources: Unnecessary registrations divert FDA resources away from monitoring facilities that are required to register, including those that pose increased food safety risks.

If you are registered with the FDA, it is critical to safeguard your business' FFR information. Below are some steps you can take to keep your business' information safe:

- Never share your FIS-FURLS username and password for any FDA registration system. Each FIS-FURLS account is designated for the individual who created it and should not be shared. If additional personnel are desired to help manage registrations or other submissions, an account holder may create subaccounts for those personnel as necessary.
- Remember that the FDA does not require you to share your FFR number with third parties. FFR information is not public. However, for imports, a facility may need to provide its FFR number to the downstream commercial entity submitting prior notice to FDA for an imported food (see 21 CFR part 1, subpart I). Note that the FEI (FDA Establishment Identification)

number is a separate, unique public identifier that can be looked up via FEI Search PortalExternal Link Disclaimer.

- Consider cancelling your FFR and re-registering your facility if you've already shared your number and/or PIN in error.

Remember not all food businesses are required to register with the FDA. Understanding whether your company must register is the first step in compliance. Food facilities that manufacture/process, pack, or hold food must register unless exempt (21 CFR 1.225; 21 CFR 1.226). Private residences are not considered facilities (21 CFR 1.227). See Section II.B of the FDA Guidance for Industry: Questions and Answers Regarding Food Facility Registration for assistance in determining if an exemption applies.

Additional Information

- Information on Food facility registration
    - Food Facility Registration Requirements: 21 CFR Part 1, Subpart H
    - Information on exemptions: 21 CFR 1.226 and Section II.B of the Guidance for Industry: Questions and Answers Regarding Food Facility Registration (Seventh Edition)
- If you suspect misuse or fraudulent use of your registration number, report it to the FDA.

FDA Calls on Infant Formula Industry to Better Safeguard Against Contaminants Introduced through their Supply Chain

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration sent a letter to the infant formula industry and their supply chain partners highlighting multiple recent public health events where risks were introduced through the supply chain and to call for increased vigilance by industry to ensure the safety of ingredients and finished infant formula products.

Recent public health events have underscored the critical importance of robust supplier oversight. FDA has investigated two multistate outbreaks of infant botulism associated with two separate brands of powdered infant formula — ByHeart, Inc., and Nara Organics, Inc. — resulting in voluntary recalls and an ongoing FDA investigation into the shared ingredient suppliers. Likewise, a global contamination event occurring in late 2025 through early 2026 resulted in nearly 150 suspected and confirmed cases of cereulide intoxication across 10 countries, traced to contaminated arachidonic acid (ARA) oil used as an ingredient in infant formula. This prompted multiple global downstream recalls, and a supplier of ARA oil being added to multiple import alerts.

Manufacturer Responsibility: Know Your Suppliers

The FDA expects manufacturers to exercise substantive oversight of their suppliers, including understanding where their ingredients come

from, how they are produced, what risks they may carry, and whether those risks are effectively controlled. When a contaminated ingredient or supplier concern is identified, whether by FDA or through industry's own monitoring, manufacturers are expected to act swiftly to assess and address the risk.

The FDA also recommends that infant formula manufacturers and their supply chain partners stay abreast of applicable recall notifications, outbreak investigations and import alerts, which may serve as important safety signals. Experience has shown that ignoring or downplaying these safety signals can lead to increased risks to infants and preventable public health events.

FDA Actions

The FDA acknowledges the challenges in managing the risks related to spore-forming microbes in infant formula ingredients and recognizes there might not be a single approach for addressing them. The Agency is prepared to work with industry to identify best practices and will continue to solicit advice from experts in academia and international scientific bodies, such as the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene and the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods.

The FDA also is continuing to investigate the root causes of the 2025 and 2026 infant botulism outbreaks associated with powdered infant formula and has completed initial surveillance to better understand the prevalence of *Clostridium botulinum* in powdered milk, the results of which are available on FDA's Post-Outbreak Response Activities: *Clostridium botulinum* Illnesses Associated with Consumption of Powdered Infant Formula webpage.

Infants are a uniquely vulnerable population. Infant formula, whether used exclusively or in combination with breastfeeding, is an important source of nutrition for many infants, and its safety is paramount. The FDA calls on all members of the infant formula industry to use the information in this letter to take prompt action to strengthen supplier oversight programs and safeguard the integrity of the infant formula supply chain. The Agency appreciates the industry's continued commitment to ensuring the safety of infant formula products marketed in the United States and looks forward to continued collaboration in protecting the health of infants and their families.

Enterprise News

Rice balls recalled because of undeclared peanuts

Khong Guan Corporation is recalling specific lots of "Glutinous Rice Balls with Black Sesame Filling" because they may contain undeclared peanuts.

People who have an allergy or severe sensitivity to peanuts run the risk of serious or life-threatening allergic reactions if they consume these products.

Product Details:

- Product: Glutinous Rice Balls with Black Sesame Filling
- Size/Packaging: 14.1-ounce bags
- UPC: 6-908791-000053
- Date Code: 10/19/2027
- Distribution: Weee!, Xin Wang Market, Garden Fresh Farmer's Market, Boss Supermarket. The product was distributed in California, Hawaii, New Jersey and Texas as well as online.

No illnesses have been reported to date.

The recall was initiated after a customer reported suspected peanut content in the product, which had been distributed in packaging that did not disclose the presence of peanuts.

Health departments post more infections in Cyclospora outbreak linked to Taylor Farms lettuce

More patients have been identified in an outbreak of infections from the Cyclospora parasite. The outbreak is linked to iceberg lettuce products from Taylor Farms.

Michigan is reporting 6,571 patients, up from 6,148 reported on July 20. Ohio's most recent count is 2,029. A number of patients in Michigan reported eating iceberg lettuce on items from Taco Bell. The restaurant chain has stopped using lettuce from Taylor Farms.

The produce company recalled its shredded iceberg lettuce and salad kits containing iceberg lettuce on July 17. Its customers include Walmart, Costco, Target, Whole Foods, McDonald's and Taco Bell, as well other fast food chains and Sysco, which is the country's largest food service supplier. Sysco supplies a number of restaurant chains in addition to hospitals, schools, hotels and other foodservice operators.

While some states are reporting thousands of outbreak patients, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's count remains stagnant. As of July 21 the agency was still reporting only 1,644 people who had cyclosporiasis from May 13 to July 13. The CDC report says there are patients in 34 states and that there is more than one outbreak. The agency says there are another 5,100 patients whose illnesses are under investigation.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said Tuesday the multistate cyclosporiasis outbreak is "under control." During a press briefing July 21, Kennedy said the Department of Health and Human Services had conducted extensive epidemiological investigations.

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