



Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio Department of Health



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To: Health Commissioners, Environmental Health Directors, Nursing Directors,
ODA Food Safety Specialists, and Other Interested Parties

Subject: FDA Updates Health Information Advisory on Melamine Contamination

Date: September 23, 2008

FDA Updates Health Information Advisory on Melamine Contamination

On September 12, 2008, in light of reports from China of melamine contaminated infant formula, the FDA issued a Health Information Advisory to proactively reassure the American public that there is no known threat of contamination in infant formula manufactured by companies that have met the requirements to sell such products in the United States. That advisory also warned members of Chinese communities in the United States that infant formula manufactured in China, possibly available for purchase at Asian markets, could pose a risk to infants.

The FDA had contacted the companies who manufacture infant formula for distribution in the United States and received information from the companies that they are not importing formula or source materials from China.

At the same time, the FDA—in conjunction with state and local officials—began a nationwide investigation to check Asian markets for Chinese manufactured infant formula that may have been brought into the United States. In particular, this effort focused on areas of the country with large Chinese communities, such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and New York. To date, investigators have visited more than 1,000 retail markets and have not found Chinese infant formula present on shelves in these markets.

In addition, the FDA is advising consumers not to purchase infant formula manufactured in China from internet sites or from other sources.

FDA has taken, and will continue to take, proactive measures to help ensure the safety of the American food supply. In conjunction with state and local officials, FDA will continue to check retail stores for food items imported from China that could contain a significant amount of milk or milk proteins. Additionally, FDA is sampling and testing milk and milk-derived ingredients and finished food products that could contain these ingredients from Chinese sources. Milk-derived ingredients include whole milk powder, non-fat milk powder, whey powder, lactose powder, and casein. This sampling and testing is done when these ingredients or products are imported into the United States or found during visits to Asian markets. If the products are adulterated because they contain melamine and/or a melamine analog, FDA will take action to prevent the products from entering the U.S. food supply.

In addition to state and local governments, FDA is working in close cooperation with Customs and Border Protection within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, other federal agencies, and foreign governments.