

Head of Trading Standards, Environmental Health
Departments and Port Health Authorities with
responsibility for feed law enforcement

28 November 2008

Reference: ENF/E/08/076

Dear Colleague,

MELAMINE CONTAMINATION OF ANIMAL FEED ORIGINATING FROM CHINA

1. In response to a recent request from the European Commission this letter seeks your assistance in increasing the level of checks on certain animal feed products originating from China which may be entering the UK. This follows concerns related to the fraudulent addition of melamine, an industrial chemical found in plastics, to animal feed materials. A copy of the relevant letter from the Commission can be found at Annex I to this letter.

2. The European Commission has requested Member States to carry out random checks of all feeds originating from China, not covered by Commission Decision 2008/798/EC on melamine in milk products and composite milk products for food or feed. This letter is further to the one sent to local authorities by the FSA dated 17 October ENF/E/08/064 (update 3).

3. The Commission is considering extending the current controls on milk products to other feed materials but in the meantime has asked Member States to increase checks of consignments of all feeding stuffs originating from China. In addition, the Food Standards Agency has recently become aware of a consignment of organic soya expeller from China which has been found to contain significant levels of melamine and is liaising directly with those local authorities affected by this incident. We are also alerting the UK feed industry and other relevant stakeholders. Additionally, we will be notifying the European Commission and other Member States of action being taken by the UK with regard to this matter.

4. In order to assist you with your controls we attach a table of products potentially affected at Annex II. In addition, those authorities responsible for official controls at ports of entry will wish to be aware that feed businesses importing high protein feed materials are required by Article 3 of Commission Decision 2008/798/EC to give prior notification to the appropriate authority of their intention to import such consignments.

5. It is important that there is close liaison between authorities with responsibilities for feed and food at points of entry to ensure that such products are tested for melamine and related compounds.

For Action:

6. Where your authority has responsibility for ports of entry you are requested to monitor manifest information and obtain information from importers (or their agents) to identify inbound consignments of products intended for use as animal feed (including pet food) originating from China.

7. Your authority is requested to sample random consignments for analysis of the compounds mentioned in paragraph 5 above.

8. Where samples are taken these should be obtained in a way which will give confidence in the subsequent analytical results. It should be borne in mind that if the results of an informal sample are disputed by the importer a sample taken in accordance with the Feedingstuffs Sampling and Analysis (England) Regulations 1999 will need to be taken before commencing the use of formal action if this proved necessary.

9. Where your authority also has responsibility for enforcement inland you are requested to include monitoring of the products listed in Annex II as part of your routine inspections of food/feed businesses and carry out specific surveillance visits to feed businesses known to deal in/use any of the products listed in Annex II. Sampling of any product identified during such visits is at the discretion of your authority.

10. Analysis of samples should be undertaken at a suitably accredited laboratory which has a validated method of analysis for the presence of melamine and related

compounds in the products listed in Annex II. Please contact Stephanie Cossom tel. no. 020 7276 8316 or e-mail: stephanie.cossom@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk if you require any information concerning accredited laboratories.

11. Where there is evidence that a consignment is contaminated with melamine all authorities are requested to seek further advice from the Agency's Animal Feed (AFU) Unit before taking further action. In such cases please contact Ron Cheesman Tel. No. 020 7276 8396 e-mail: ron.cheesman@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk.

12. Returns regarding results of analyses, both negative and positive for feeding stuffs containing milk products are currently required to be sent to Kara Thomas at the FSA (letter dated 17 October ENF/E/08/064). Returns on analyses carried out on feedingstuffs not containing milk products are required to be made separately to the FSA using the form attached in Annex III to Kara Thomas. The completed returns should be e-mailed to: melamine.enquiries@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk. Should you experience any problems with making this return please contact Mercy Adebisi Tel. No. 020 7276 8470 e-mail: mercy.adebisi@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

13. If you need any further information please let us know.

Yours faithfully

Ron Cheesman
Animal Feed Unit

cc: APA
APHA
CIEH
LACORS
Health Protection Agency
Trading Standards Institute

Annex I



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Directorate D - Animal Health and Welfare
Director

Brussels, 10.11.2008
SANCO/D2/WT/ng D(2008)420407

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE HEADS OF DELEGATION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH

Section Animal Nutrition

Subject: Presence of melamine in feed originating from China

I refer to the discussions at the last meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health, section Animal Nutrition, on 23 October 2008 concerning measures on feed consignments from China with respect to melamine.

Some weeks ago, the European Commission was made aware that high levels of melamine were found in food and feed in China. In order to counter the risk for animal and human health that may result from exposure to melamine in food and feed, the Commission adopted the emergency Decision 2008/798/EC. Accordingly, Member States have to control all consignments of composite products including feed, containing milk products on the presence of melamine and may carry out random checks for melamine on other food and feed, in which the protein content is of relevance, originating in or consigned from China prior to import. The costs incurred for these controls are to be borne by the operators responsible for the import.

Based on further information on this issue, the Commission asks Member States to increase significantly the controls on the presence of melamine in feed originating in or consigned from the People's Republic of China. It is stressed that feed includes compound feed, pet food, medicated feed, feed additives and feed materials.

Member States are reminded that any product found to contain melamine in excess of 2,5 mg/kg product shall be destroyed without delay and that the costs for the measures are to be borne by the feed business operator responsible for that product.

Member States are also requested to report the results of the controls to the Commission through the RASFF. Unfavourable results should be notified without delay. Favourable results may be reported on a two weeks basis.

In case you wish further information or clarification, you can contact Frans Verstraete (email: Frans.Verstraete@ec.europa.eu, tel. +32 2 29 56 359) or Wolfgang Trunk (email: Wolfgang.Trunk@ec.europa.eu, tel. +32 2 2986 375).

The Commission Services will keep you informed of any new relevant information on this issue. An extensive discussion on this issue will be held at the next meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health, section Animal Nutrition, on 27/28 November 2008.

Bernard Van Goethem

Annex II

Affected Products to be subject of increased checks

Product	CN Code*
Wheat gluten	1109 00 00
Corn gluten	2303 101110
Corn meal	1103 131000 – 1103 139000
Corn pellets	1103 20 40 - 1103204000
Soy protein/organic soya expeller	3504000090
Rice bran	2302 10 – 2302400200 2302 10 2302400800
Rice protein concentrate	3504000090
Pet food containing products not of animal origin	2309 10 51 00

*CN Codes should be treated as indicative of the product descriptions

Annex III

Form for reporting results of analyses conducted on animal feed other than composite products containing milk products originating from China

	Product	Expiration date (Best Before Date)	Importer	Size	Batch Number	Date tested