

Saudis find melamine in Chinese milk powder

Dec 03, 2008

RIYADH, (AFP) - Food inspectors in Saudi Arabia have discovered the potentially dangerous chemical melamine in Chinese-made milk powder distributed by **Nestle** in the kingdom, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority said in a statement.

Melamine traces were found in tins of Nesvita Pro-Bones milk powder from five different production dates in 2007 and 2008, the authority said in a posting on its website on Tuesday.

It said the tainted powder was discovered in a random survey of 52 samples of imported products containing milk powder.

"The SFDA found five samples from all the samples tested... tainted with melamine," it said, adding that it was also found in samples of the Malaysia-manufactured Apollo Chocolate Wafer Cream snack bars.

There was no immediate comment from **Nestle's** Middle East subsidiary on the Saudi report.

Melamine is an industrial chemical which Chinese producers of milk powder, animal feeds and other food products used in the place of more expensive protein additives, which it resembles, though it has no nutritional value.

The chemical can cause kidney stones if taken in excessive levels. Chinese infants who were fed tainted milk powder suffered the worst because they consumed more of the chemical.

It has been found in China and some other countries in infant milk formulas and products like chocolate bars for which milk powder was used, eggs from poultry fed with some Chinese-made animal feed, and pet foods made with ingredients from China.

At least six children have died of kidney failure and 294,000 have fallen ill in China this year after consuming dairy products containing melamine, Beijing said on Monday.

China's health ministry said 51,900 children had been admitted to hospital for treatment in relation to tainted milk products.

Numerous countries have announced recalls of products made with tainted Chinese milk powder.

{Zawya}