

MAK-BEA News

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FOOD SAFETY REPORT

Strengthening Safety on Imported Foods

Imports are a major part of the nation's food supply. While the majority of imported food is safe for consumption there are times when it is not.

Of recent concern are imports from China. A recent Reuters/Zogby poll showed that 78 percent of Americans worry about the safety of Chinese imports. The survey followed a sequence of alarming reports of toys laced with lead paint, seafood containing banned anti-

biotics, contaminated toothpaste, and other risky products from China. Some consumers are even shifting buying habit to avoid Chinese imports.

Ensuring the United State has the safest food supply is the top priority of the food and beverage industry.

Therefore the Groceries Manufacturers Association has unveiled a plan to strengthen imported food safety. The Commitment to Consumers:

The Four Pillars of Food Safety, is a unique plan designed to protect consumers by strengthening, modernizing and improving the system governing the safety of food and food ingredients imported into the United States.

The GMA's plan calls for moves such as:

- ◆ Requiring importers to adopt a foreign supplier quality assurance program.
- ◆ Enabling food companies and importers to qualify their prod-

ucts as lower risk by sharing test results and supply chain information with the FDA, with lower-risk products gaining expedited treatment at borders.

◆ Building capacity within foreign governments to facilitate food-safety standards that are "more closely aligned" with the FDA.

◆ Expanding the capacity of the FDA with "the resources it needs to get the job done."

Kitchen Appliance Removes Bacteria



On August 22, a new kitchen appliance became available to consumers. Not an appliance that can dice and chop or blend smoothly, but one that removes bacteria from food. This countertop appliance, known as CulinaryPrep™, applies a patented process to remove E. coli, Listeria, and Salmonella.

CulinaryPrep™ uses the Grovac™

Process to remove unwanted bacteria and pathogens from fish, meat, and produce. The process can reduce the level of pathogenic and spoilage bacteria on meat and produce by 99.5%. By removing the bacteria the natural flavor of food is enhanced and shelf life is extended.

The Grovac™ Process alternately exposes food to a vacuum

environment and a specially-formulated, all-natural solution to remove impurities. The process was developed by Bill Groves and was intended to remove "muddy" taste from catfish.

Numerous studies have been conducted at Kansas State University, Louisiana State University, Whitbeck and Warren Analytical Laboratories to show its

effectiveness

CulinaryPrep™ enables the consumer to control the safety of their food supply from their own kitchen. It is manufactured and distributed by Creative Culinary Solutions, Inc. and will be available at retail stores and online.



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Aspartame – Safe for Consumption

Recently published in September issue of Critical Reviews in Toxicology, a review of research shows that there is no evidence that aspartame causes cancer, neurological damage or other health problems in humans.

Aspartame is a non-nutritive sweetener that is approximately 200 times sweeter than sucrose. While aspartame and sucrose have the same number of calories on a weight-to-weight scale, aspartame can be added as a sweetener at a fraction of the amount of sucrose that would be required. This allows for the same sweetness with far fewer calories.

Discovered in 1965, aspartame has become a popular sweetener used in more than 6000 food and pharmaceutical products in over 90 countries. Its use ranges from soft drinks to ketchup.

An international expert panel from 10 universities and medical schools assessed the safety of aspartame. Numerous reports were looked at, in-

cluding toxicological, clinical, and epidemiological studies dating back to the 1970s. These reports ranged from pre-clinical work to the latest studies on aspartame. Also studied was level of use and regulation data.

The research team analyzed studies that tested the number of health effects of varying level of aspartame, including levels that greatly exceeded the acceptable daily intake on both humans and animals. Not only were healthy adults and children looked at but also the effect of aspartame on adults and children with diabetes, hyperactive and sugar-sensitive children, individuals with depression and people with Parkinson's disease.

The expert panel concluded that "aspartame is safe at current levels of consumption, which remain well below established ADI [acceptable daily intake] levels, even among high user sub-populations. No credible evidence was found that aspartame is carcinogenic, neurotoxic

or has or any other adverse effects when consumed even at levels many times the established ADI levels."

The panel also concluded that specifically: aspartame does not have carcinogenic or cancer promoting activity; no neurological effect (memory or learning problems); aspartame has no effect on behavior, cognitive function, neural function, or seizure; no adverse effects on reproduction or lactation; safe for diabetics and sugar-free diets; no association between aspartame and obesity; no evidence to support association between aspartame and brain/hematopoietic tumor development.

Aspartame: A Safety Evaluation Based on Current Use Levels, Regulations and Toxicological and Epidemiological Studies" was funded by unlimited support from Ajinomoto Company, Inc. Aspartame is one of Ajinomoto's core strategic products.