



ENZYME TECHNICAL ASSOCIATION

1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Telephone 202.739.5612

Fax 202.739.3001

www.enzymetechnicalassoc.org

Enzyme Technical Association

Statement on Chloramphenicol Contamination of Enzyme Preparations

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A voluntary recall of enzyme preparations contaminated with the antibiotic chloramphenicol was recently announced by a U.S.-based enzyme company that imported and distributed the affected product. The chloramphenicol-contaminated enzyme products were imported from a small enzyme producer located in India. It has been reported that contaminated enzyme products from this Indian producer have also been imported into Europe, Japan and Canada.

The safety and quality of our products is of paramount importance to the enzyme industry. The industry is working with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ("FDA"), the Canadian Food Inspection Agency ("CFIA"), the European Food Safety Authority ("EFSA"), and the Food Safety Commission of Japan ("FSCJ"). The contaminated enzymes were used to manufacture a number of products, including food and dietary supplements. Enzymes are generally used at very low levels in food processing, resulting in only trace amounts or undetectable levels of the contaminant in most final foods. The Enzyme Technical Association ("ETA")¹ is not aware of any adverse health reactions associated with the low levels of chloramphenicol contamination.

Chloramphenicol is not permitted for use in the manufacture of food, and the use of chloramphenicol in the production of enzymes is not a standard industry practice. The North American enzyme industry has an excellent safety record, and the safety of our industry's products and the health of our customers are our highest priorities.

The ETA and its member companies will continue to work with the FDA and CFIA to actively address the current contamination and take steps to prevent such an incident from occurring again in the future.

Inquiries may be directed to the ETA General Counsel and Secretary, Anthony Pavel, at +1 (202) 739-5612.

¹ The ETA is a trade association that represents manufacturers and marketers of enzyme products in North America, including the United States, Canada and Mexico. The ETA has been in existence since 1970 and has taken an active role in assisting in the development of regulations and policies that affect the enzyme industry. Its membership of 26 companies represents a majority of the North American enzyme industry.
<http://www.enzymeassociation.org/>.