



NEWS SCAN - CHINA

China Passed First New Food Safety Law – 2009/03

Chinese lawmakers passed new food-safety legislation on Feb.28, 2009. It is intended to tighten supervision of manufacturers and impose tougher penalties on those who make bad products. The government seeks to restore public confidence after several scandals of tainted food. It also establishes a Cabinet-level food safety commission to improve monitoring, beef up safety standards, and recall substandard products.

The new law, approved by the standing committee of the National People's Congress after years of drafting and revision, also sets up a system to recall problem products and authorizes the enforcement of uniform nationwide standards for everything from allowable additives to nutritional labeling.

Under the new law, which takes effect on June 1, 2009, companies that produce substandard products will face higher fine. Consumers can get financial compensation of up to 10 times the price of the product, in addition to compensation for any harm caused by tainted food. Those whose licenses are revoked because of illegal conduct will be banned from food manufacturing for five years. Companies also will be legally liable for any harm they cause consumers. Celebrities that endorse faulty products also can be held liable under the new law.

The new law also regulates food import and export, what are required for the labels on the packages etc.

For the details of the law, please visit:

<http://www.lawinfochina.com/law/display.asp?db=1&id=6777&keyword=food%20safety%20law>

Source:

Gordon Fairclough, Wall Street Journal, "Beijing Tightens Food-Safety Laws," March 2, 2009.
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123591044294303161.html> (March 17, 2009)

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