

Mustard ingredients and peanut contamination - guidance for consumers

An update for consumers including questions and answers on the incident and investigation into the contamination of mustard ingredients with peanuts.

What has happened and what are the FSA doing to keep people safe?

The Food Standards Agency (FSA), working with Food Standards Scotland (FSS), is coordinating investigations by several Local Authorities into the food supply chain of mustard ingredients which may have been contaminated with peanuts. As a result of extensive and ongoing investigations, the food business FGS Ingredients Limited who import mustard to manufacture spice products including curry powders, seasonings and spice blends from India, have undertaken a precautionary withdrawal and recall of all products containing mustard.

While our investigations are ongoing, there is still a risk associated with these products, and we continue to advise consumers with a peanut allergy to avoid consuming any products that contain or may contain mustard, mustard seeds, mustard powder or mustard flour.

Why are so many products being recalled?

As a result of extensive and ongoing investigations, the food business FGS Ingredients Limited, who supply several manufacturers, retailers and food service, has taken the decision to undertake a widespread precautionary withdrawal and recall of all products containing mustard.

These products have been used in various other products such as spice products. The spice products include curry powders, seasonings and spice blends containing mustard. These may have subsequently been used in products such as ready meals and snacks which may pose a risk to consumers with a peanut allergy, as they may have been contaminated with peanuts.

What is the latest advice to consumers?

We are still advising that consumers with a peanut allergy should avoid consuming all foods that contain or may contain mustard, mustard seeds, mustard powder or mustard flour.

As mustard is a regulated allergen, food businesses must by law provide this information to customers. We would advise those with a peanut allergy, and those who care for someone with a peanut allergy, to ask the restaurant or cafe about foods that might contain mustard when eating out or getting a takeaway.

If our advice changes, we will notify consumers via our website and social channels.

How will I know if a food contains mustard?

If mustard is intentionally present in a food, it should be included in the ingredient listing and emphasised on the label. If there is a risk that mustard could be unintentionally present in food,

there may be a 'may contain' label for mustard. If you are eating out, please ask the cafe or restaurant staff if any of their products contain or may contain mustard as food businesses must, by law, provide this information to customers.?

Is mustard contamination with peanuts a global concern? Do I need to take extra precautions if I am travelling outside the UK?

At this stage our advice to avoid mustard, and products with mustard ingredients, applies to the UK only. The FSA cannot give detailed advice on other countries and so if you are concerned, you should seek advice from food safety authorities in the country you are travelling to.

Our investigations continue to establish the scale of the incident both in the UK and internationally. We have been engaging with international partners, and there are currently no confirmed reports of detections or concerns in other countries – however these investigations are ongoing and could change.

Mustard is a globally traded product, and any countries that have been supplied with impacted products by the UK have been notified via an international food safety alert system.

What will happen to food businesses and suppliers selling these products?

Local Authorities are the enforcement body for investigating reports of contaminated products and will take enforcement action if necessary.

If investigations find that contamination took place outside the UK, it is for regulators in those countries to take action if necessary.

Can the FSA produce a list of brands that are safe for people with peanut allergies that are not impacted by this ongoing incident?

Due to the scale of the incident and the range of products involved, it is not possible for the FSA to provide a safe list at this time. However, we will continue to share information on products that are potentially unsafe to help consumers make informed choices.

Our advice for people with a peanut allergy is to avoid eating all foods that contain, or may contain mustard, mustard powder, mustard seeds, or mustard flour because they may have been contaminated with peanuts.

How long will this incident go on for?

This is a complex investigation, and we are working with trade associations and affected businesses to identify the root cause of the contamination. As part of the investigation, we are liaising with Indian authorities to fully understand the situation and what happened. This will take some time to complete but we will continue to update consumers with important information when it becomes available. In the meantime, several additional controls and checks have been implemented at industry level, to ensure food is safe and will remain in place until this is resolved.

How can I find up-to-date information on which products have been affected?

We have provided a [full list of recalled products](#).

We will update consumers as soon as more information becomes available and would strongly encourage individuals with allergies to [sign up for our allergy alerts](#) to stay informed about future recalls.