Food Scares & Product Recalls, Past, Present and Future

BCCC Annual Conference

Tony Hines MBE, MICPEM
18th March 2010
Food Scares & Product Recalls, Past, Present and Future
or
25 years in 25 Minutes
on one of the most popular global products!
The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department
(Mr. David Mellor)
I have today received the following information from the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. At 3.10 pm on Saturday, 17 November, New Scotland Yard received a telephone call from Sunday Mirror informing the police that he had just received a telephone call from the Animal Liberation Front stating that Mars bars throughout the country had been injected with rat poison. That telephone call was followed by the receipt at the Sunday Mirror of a Mars bar and a letter from the ALF, in which the ALF claimed to have adulterated Mars bars in London, Leeds, York, Southampton and Coventry. The Mars bar and letter were handed to the Metropolitan police.
The success of this action shows that economic sabotage is a powerful, effective tool for animal liberationists. Anytime a company has its product tampered with, the potential injury to its customers is too potent to ignore. By understanding this fact, The Animal Rights Militia capitalized on this fear to directly save animals.

One of the most famous actions carried out by ARM happened in England, 1984.

http://www.liberation-mag.org.uk/alf1.htm
Kinder Eggs - Media Coverage over 12 years
The three cases where fatalities occurred have now been well documented and reported. Jennifer Ashton from Birmingham choked on part of a Kinder egg. She was three, and I know her mother is here today. Roddy Breslin from Omagh died after putting the capsule from a Kinder egg in his mouth. He was three. Caren Day from Sheffield died choking on parts of a Chupa Chups egg. She was four. So that you know, Madam Deputy Speaker, how strongly these families feel about the issue, I shall quote from the letter sent to me by Mrs. Ashton. She said:

"We are so grateful that someone in parliament is finally trying to do something about the killer sweets that are available everywhere you look.

January 2000
“Manufacturers who continue to sell such sweets react by claiming that they warn children by printing safety warnings on the wrapper. However, children as young as two or three will not be able to read, let alone understand, what the wrappers are saying. Indeed, there is an argument that such wrappers fail the Department of Trade and Industry's 1990 guidelines on safety”
'Ban toys in sweets.'
Daily Mirror, 29th October 2003

A survey of 145 Accident and Emergency consultants revealed that 60% considered novelty toys in sweets are a danger to small children. The doctors are calling for them to be banned. The article in the Daily Express, says that Ministers have been urging the Government to issue a blanket ban on Kinder Eggs that contain tiny plastic toys; however, the Company has stressed that the product complies with safety regulations, and a spokesman for Ferrero said that 'Statistically Kinder Surprise could not be more safe'. 
Search for “Chocolate and Recall”
On Food Standards Agency web site
388 ‘hits’, 20+ pages

FoodLine Web ‘News’ database
88 ‘hits’ where chocolate is implicated
(Biscuits, yoghurts) from 1992 - current
The Emergence of Allergies

Daily Mail page 7

10th March 1997

SIZE 7cm x 12cm

Notes:

On the back of this recall, British Sugar recalled Silver Spoon Chocolate Spread
Allergy victim dies as label hides nut alert

A WOMAN collapsed and died after suffering a severe allergic reaction to a doughnut.

Paula Watts, 28, failed to see a label warning that the food contained nuts because it had been covered by a reduced price sticker, her father claims.

Now he is planning to sue the supermarket chain Asda.

"For the sake of a badly-placed label we have lost a lovely, bubbly, friendly young girl who had so much to offer and we lived so much," said John Watts, 54, a yachtsman from Ringwood, Hampshire.

"You would have to go a long way to find a more popular girl than Paula and the whole family is distraught."

Miss Watts, an optician from West Moors, Dorset, ate the blueberry doughnut after a night out with her friend Miss Burdett, 29, in Bournemouth.

She immediately suffered an allergic reaction and collapsed, screaming for help.

Miss Burdett, a nurse, managed to revive her friend but before an ambulance could get to hospital, she fell into a coma.

Her parents did everything they could to bring their daughter round, maintaining a vigil at her bedside and playing her her favourite music, but eight days later she died.

Miss Watts had suffered an allergy to nuts all her life and her family say she always took care to check ingredients and read labels.

"Paula was a sensible girl and was meticulous in checking labels," said Mr Watts. "I've got the packet she ate from and Asda didn't remove the reduced price label, which was over the barcode and the allergy warning when it went though the till.

'She ate the doughnut because she couldn't see the warning and thought it was safe.'

One person in 290 suffers from nut allergies and as many as seven die each year from allergic attacks.

A severe allergy can trigger anaphylactic shock, in which victims may choke or collapse.

Paula's mother Carol Stone, 55, said her daughter's death had left a void in their lives.

"Wherever she was, there was laughter - she was always the life of the party," she said.

'She had lots of friends and her colleagues called her their ray of sunshine. We feel privileged to have had the special time with her."

A spokesman for Asda said it had launched an investigation.

'We were very upset to hear of Paula Watts's death and naturally our thoughts are with her family at this time,' she said.

'We were very concerned when her family contacted us and so we have launched our own investigation into the matter and are waiting for its conclusion.'

A post mortem found that Miss Watts died of natural causes. There will be an inquest into her death.

Popular: Paula Watts with her baby half-sister Daniolle
c.kitchen@dailymail.co.uk

Best Value...

...under a grand!
Chocolate alert.  
Times, 24th November 2005
Cadbury is recalling 360,000 Dairy Milk Miniatures Advent Calendars, as ingredients in the chocolate that may cause an allergic reaction have not been declared on the packaging.
Product recall: Cadbury milk chocolate Easter egg and car mini kit.
Times, 2\textsuperscript{nd} April 2004
Cadbury is recalling a milk chocolate Easter egg containing a car mini kit in the England football strip, due to the fact that the sucker used to attach the kit to a window may become detached and pose a choking hazard to small children. The egg is sold only in Woolworths and Woolworths big W stores and is itself perfectly safe. A refund will be given to customers wishing to return the car mini kit.
An investigation is under way after 13-year-old Dolly Way collapsed and died at a bus stop after eating a chocolate bar. She is understood to have had a dairy allergy, and began suffering chest pains after eating the chocolate.

Daily Express, 30th August 2004

“Subsequent investigations refuted that a dairy allergy was the main cause of her death”
The Anaphylaxis campaign
30 years ago no one had heard of food allergies
People did not die from food allergies
Newspapers did not carry ‘Product Recall Notices’
Children were not issued with adrenaline pens
Schools did not ban peanuts
A bite of food can kill
Confectionery and Nuts have a long association
A kiss from someone who has recently eaten an allergenic ingredient can kill
Living with food allergy is scary
Parents are petrified for their offspring and family members
Parents and allergy sufferers feel threatened by labelling and food service
Sufferers feel medical intervention is insufficient
Around 50 per cent of food product recalls the in UK and US were because packaging did not describe one or more allergens present, a survey has shown.
Not just about labelling – it’s all embracing GMP
Common sense and communication
It’s all the time, everywhere and everybody
It’s always obvious afterwards!

It’s time, it’s language, it’s training, it’s appreciation

It’s eyes wide open
What can trigger a crisis?

Foreign bodies (Contamination, including chemical)
Taste (Taint)
Shelf-life (Micro.)
Illness and allergies
Packaging, claims, labelling
Accidental and malicious contamination

(Publish date: November 2005)
The BBC reports that Mars has recalled packs of Maltesers and Revels after customers found small pieces of rubber in some of the sweets. Mars has said the incident is 'isolated' and is due to a problem on the production line at its Slough factory. Packs with best before dates of December 2007 and January 2008 are affected.
Food executive sentenced to jail over E. coli outbreak
10th September 2007

Breaching food safety rules can lead to jail, as the executive of a UK food manufacturer has discovered.

William John Tudor of John Tudor & Son, in Bridgend, South Wales was sentenced by Cardiff Crown Court on Friday to a year in jail for seven offences relating to a fatal outbreak of E.coli O157 in 2005.

Sadly the food industry creates it’s own problems!
The Public Enquiry into the September 2005 Outbreak of \textit{E.coli} O157 in South Wales

Summary

Professor Hugh Pennington

March 2009
Dead mouse in chocolate bar gives Mars a narrow squeak

BY MARGARET HODGSON
FOOD giant Mars was cleared of breaking hygiene laws yesterday company had taken all - Mr. Weakley's

The chocolate mouse

Mars sued over bar with caramel, nuts and ‘a dead rodent’

WHEN a colleague bought her a chocolate bar to enjoy with a cup of tea at work, Maire Devine was delighted.

Three quarters of the way into the Toffee Bar, however, some- thing yarly hAPy, Perry told her all was not what it seemed.

As far as she thought she had taken a health food, but analysis by the National Board of Standards revealed the unwanted truth.

The chocolate was a dead mouse, a court heard yesterday. To be seen.


Why was this incident so important to case law?
Media Entertainment and Exposure

- Don’t blame the media for your mistakes
- 24-hour rolling TV has an insatiable appetite for News
- The media’s relationship with Politicians and high profile public figures has become damaged
- “Spin” – Alastair Campbell
- Weapons of mass destruction, Iraq war, Dr Kelly
- Have the media become cynical?
- Are they lied to?
- Do the public take many newspaper stories with a pinch of salt?
- They take real notice of scandals and corruption.

Piers Morgan, former editor and current TV show host
The Chocolate incident no-one anticipated or expected
Cadbury Schweppes plc recalls a range of its own brand chocolate products due to possible contamination with salmonella

Friday 23 June 2006

Food Alert: for Action

Ref: 36/2006 (38/2006 Scotland)

Heads of Environmental Health and Directors of Trading Standards will wish to be aware that Cadbury Schweppes Plc has recalled seven different own brand chocolate products due to possible contamination with *Salmonella* Montevideo. Cadbury Schweppes Plc has undertaken a full product recall and will be issuing a press notice on 23 June to alert consumers to the reasons for the recall and the actions they can take if they have purchased the affected products.
A SALMONELLA alert linked to Cadbury’s chocolate could be responsible for an outbreak which has struck down at least 35 people, mainly children.

The firm said yesterday it was taking more than a million chocolate bars off the shelves over fears of contamination.

At the same time, government health experts warned an outbreak of food poisoning caused by exactly the same bug. Around half of the victims were children under seven.

Cadbury’s new owners - in a move seen and was found linked in the chocolate and food poisoning outbreak - appears the salmonella in the chocolate came from weak water from a factory pipe into chocolate mixture at a Cadbury’s plant. The practice of the bug in Cadbury’s product is rare but it is found in the chocolate and food poisoning outbreak.

The Health Protection Agency said last night that it would investigate if the chocolate was to blame for the food poisoning outbreak. The

Im Cadbury bars recalled in alert

Cadbury faces damages case by victims of chocolate bug
Cadbury fined GBP1m over Salmonella scare.
17th July 2007

Confectioner Cadbury has been fined GBP1m over the Salmonella scare that hit the UK, several newspapers, including the Daily Mail, have reported. The firm was given the fine by Birmingham Crown Court for food and hygiene offences. The company has already suffered a major financial hit from the incident after having to recall over one million of its chocolate bars.
Cadbury’s recall chocolate again

CADBURY was yesterday forced to recall thousands of chocolate bars because the warning ‘may contain traces of nuts’ was left off the wrapper. The bars affected are Dairy Milk Double Choc 250g promotional packs bearing the slogan ‘Win a prize and a half’.

The company warned those with nut allergies not to eat the bars but to get in touch for a refund. The bars are safe for customers without such allergies. No other Dairy Milk products or ‘prize and a half’ packs are affected.

Cadbury was fined £1 million in July over a salmonella outbreak which put three people in hospital and left dozens ill. More than a million chocolate bars had to be recalled after the outbreak was made public in June 2006. A rare strain of the bug was traced to a leaking pipe at the firm’s factory in Marlbrook, Herefordshire.

Daily Mail
Saturday 15th September 2007
A GERMAN college has complained about new Haribo sweet wrappers which it claims portray fruit in sexual positions.

"We are shocked at the shameless presentation of sexual practices on the wrapping which includes not only sexual intercourse but also fellatio and cunnilingus," wrote the St Basills Jesuit College, Horsham.

The letter complaining about the new packaging of Haribo's Maoam fruit chews, added, "It's irresponsible to expose children to pornographic representations."

A Spokesman for Haribo said: "The new wrapping is certainly bolder than the old, but we have not had any other complaints. In fact until now the feedback has been positive."
2001 - Famous for 15 minutes

2001 - Famous for 15 minutes
2001 - Famous for 15 minutes

Mars A Day Helps You Work, Rex and Play.”

One Quality control manager Christopher Woodage said: “The precautions we take mean it is inconceivable that a tooth of any sort could find its way into the product during manufacture.

“I believe this tooth could not have been present in the Mars Bar when it was left our factory.”

BLEMS WITH A CHOC BAR?
Mum's KitKat needle horror

by JERRY LAWTON

MUM-TO-BE Tracey Moorhouse fears she is the victim of a chocolate saboteur after cutting her mouth on a 3in needle hidden in a KitKat. Tracey, 33, believes it was put there deliberately and other bars could have been sabotaged. Chocolate giants Nestlé have removed the batch.

Crisis Management - ACCIDENT OR MALICIOUS BY CONSUMERS OR STAFF?

13th June 2001
3 Newspapers
2001

Twix scare

Three million Twix bars have been destroyed after common flour beetles were found at Mars’s factory in Slough, Berks. Production was halted for three days when staff saw “black specks” in biscuits.
DRUG SWEETS ALERT

DETECTIVES warned yesterday that drug dealers are peddling heroin in Nestle Kinder eggs after two men were arrested in a raid on a house at Hove, Sussex.

• Crisis Management - CRIMINAL ACTIVITY 2001
Worker’s death by chocolate

A sweet factory worker died after falling into a 1,200-gallon vat of liquefied chocolate.

Yoni Cordon, 19, was found by fellow workers at the factory in Hatfield, Pennsylvania.

Police believe Mr Cordon had been working on a platform near the opening of the vat, which is used for mixing and melting chocolate.

Nobody saw him fall and it was not known how long he was submerged. Police said foul play was not suspected.

AP, Hatfield
Sunday Mirror 30th July 2000

...wholly irresponsible of workers at R&JB Higgins, a company sub-contracted by Cadbury, to take chocolate marked "unfit for human consumption" and destined for pig food - to send for recycling.

All this for the sake of greed. Are they so low paid that they have to resort to fiddling?
Product Recall OSCARS 2003
PRODUCT RECALL
BASSETT’S CLARNICO MINT CREAMS

Following a small number of consumer complaints, Bassett’s is recalling Clarnico Mint Creams in both 200g bags and Pick and Mix. Bags labelled with a Best Before End (BBE) date of May 2002, June 2002 and August 2002 should not be consumed. If you have bought this product, either in 200g bags or as part of a Pick and Mix, you should return the product for a full refund to:

Clarnico
Freepost MID 20061
Birmingham B30 20Z

or ring our Helpline number 08457 818181

This action has been taken as a precautionary measure following a small number of consumer complaints in which glass particles have been found in the product. No other Bassett’s product is affected.

Bassett’s apologises for any inconvenience caused to its customers.

BCCCA OSCAR for best Recall Notice 2003
Consumer Communications or Media Entertainment

Every move you make
Every vow you break
Every smile you fake
Every claim you stake
I’ll be watching you……….
The Associated Press reports that two men have been condemned to death in China for their involvement in the country's contaminated milk scandal. Tian Wenhua, 66, former general manager and chairwoman of Sanlu Group, the dairy firm at the centre of the crisis, was handed a life sentence.

22nd January 2009
Spencer and Fleetwood withdraw certain varieties of chocolate novelty products due to contamination with melamine
Wednesday 22 October 2008
Food Alert: for Information

Products being withdrawn are:

Fifi’s Boobies, 80g
Lollipop Boobs, 30g
Cheeky Chocolate Milk Chocolate Bottoms, 42g

Note: The FSA was extremely sensitive to the potential ‘Red Top’ Headlines
The recent events in China will be remembered as one of the biggest single food safety failures in history. It appears to have been caused by the deliberate use of chemical contamination of milk to defraud major dairy companies. It has been claimed that such adulteration was so unusual and unexpected that no reasonable food manager or regulator could have expected the problem to arise.

International Food Hygiene, November 2008
Monday 25th January 2010

Divine Chocolate has withdrawn some of its Divine Dark Chocolate because the product contains milk, which is not an intended ingredient. Although the allergy advice on the product label mentions that the product ‘may contain traces of milk’, the amount of milk is above what might be described as ‘trace levels'. The Food Standards Agency has issued an Allergy Alert. The product is a possible health risk for anyone who is allergic to or intolerant of milk. Anyone with an allergy to or intolerance of milk, not to eat this product.
Tuesday 9 February 2010

Cadbury Chunks Bournville, which can be used for cooking and baking in the home, contains milk, which is not an intended ingredient. This makes the product a possible health risk for anyone who is allergic to or intolerant of milk. The Agency has issued an Allergy Alert advising anyone with an allergy to or intolerance of milk to not eat this Product. The product has been marketed and sold by Premier Foods under licence. Although the product is no longer manufactured, a small number of bags may still be on sale............
Man accused of scattering peanuts in food factory is acquitted.

The BBC reports that Paul Bentley, the man accused of scattering a food factory with peanuts, has had the charges against him dropped. The factory he worked at had to be closed and cleaned at a cost of GBP1.2m. The jury in Mr Bentley's trial failed to reach a verdict and he was acquitted.

24th February 2009
A hunt has been launched for a prize-winning coin that entitles the winner to a £1,000 slap up party. The gold piece was hidden in one of 180 Cadbury’s Creme Eggs handed to guests at a networking event in Wigan. There are fears that the winner might have inadvertently eaten it.

Sunday Times, 14th February 2010
What are the issues going to be over the next 25 years?

- Science will get more sensitive – we will be able to detect contaminants at lower levels
- Fair Trade will become open to abuse
- Food Supply Chains will become vulnerable
- Emerging mass markets will develop
- Consumption will increase
- We will face the threat of intentional contamination
- Cross contamination will still be an issue for some
- We will still put the right product in the wrong box
- Obesity will be a ‘bigger issue’
- We all view Confectionery as one of the pleasures in our life
Tony Hines MBE, MICPEM
Head of Food Security and Crisis Management Manager
Leatherhead Food Research
Randalls Road
Leatherhead
Surrey KT22 7RY. UK
00 44 (0)1372 822245
mobile 00 44 (0) 7778 474855
thines@leatherheadfood.com
www.leatherheadfood.com