Sampling Guide for FDA Import Alert 99-33

On April 12, 2011, the FDA issued an alert that serves to impound all imported food products from six prefectures in Japan until they can be proven to have radionuclide contamination below the FDA Protective Action Guides. The importer must sample the food products, have them tested, and return the results to FDA to have the product released. A copy of the Import Alert can be found at this website:

http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/cms_ia/importalert_621.html

A link to the FDA Protective Action Guides can be found on the main page of our website. If you have a shipment that has, or will be, impounded, here is our best guidance on what to do, based on information provided by the FDA..

What to sample: Samples of 12 to 16 oz of the product should be collected randomly from the shipment. The sampling density (e.g. the number of cartons that must be sampled out of a shipment) that the FDA will find representative of the shipment is set by the Field Science Office at (301) 796-5992. We have not been able to get through to this office as yet (4/13/11). As an initial estimate, it would seem reasonable to take a sample from every tenth carton of product, or a minimum of three samples per product type. Place the samples in individual bags and place sample numbers on them that are meaningful to you (e.g. product, lot, carton number, sample number). Remember, the FDA field inspector must be able to see where the samples were collected.

What to Order: Method 901.1, High Resolution Gamma Spectroscopy.

How to submit: Place the samples in a cooler with a couple of cold packs and ship them to:

Radiation Safety Engineering, Inc
3245 North Washington Street
Chandler, AZ 85225

Include detailed contact information so we may contact you for additional data, if necessary and a chain of custody for the samples (call if you don't have one). Also include any special instructions, such as whether you want the report in traditional (pCi/g) or SI (Bq/kg) units.

Report: We will analyze the samples and report the activity level of the man-made contaminants observed, if any, or the minimum detectable activity for the radioactive isotope if none is detected. The most common isotopes that have been detected on food from the contaminated areas of Japan are ^{137}Cs, ^{131}I, and ^{134}Cs.

Contact: Please contact our lab at (800) 477-9691 with any questions. Copies of our lab license and past performance tests are available on request.