

Quarantine Alert

The information here covers AQIS quarantine requirements only and is current on the date of transmission but may change without notice. Importers must satisfy quarantine concerns and comply with quarantine conditions applicable at the time of entry. The Commonwealth through AQIS is not liable for any costs arising from or associated with decisions to import based on conditions presented here which are not current at time of importation.

It is the importer's responsibility to be aware of and to ensure compliance with the requirements of all other regulatory and advisory bodies prior to and after importation. eg. Australian Customs Service, State Departments of Agriculture, Imported Foods Program, Therapeutic Goods Administration, National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals.

Public Quarantine Alert PQA0178

IMPORTED FOOD NOTICE 45/01

23 November 2001

Note: The information in this document covers AQIS Imported Food requirements only and is current on the date of publication but may change without notice. Importers must satisfy all requirements of the Imported Food Control Act 1992 applicable at the time of entry. The Commonwealth through AQIS is not liable for any costs arising from or associated with decisions to import based on information presented here which is not current at time of importation.

SUBJECT: 'Jelly cups' and food containing konjac

The Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) have advised of the serious risk to human health, food items sold as "jelly cups" pose, due to the properties of the ingredient konjac in combination with the shape and size of the food portions.

The ingredient konjac, is also known as "konjac flour", "konnyaku", "glucomannan", "yam flour or yam powder", "taro flour or taro powder" is obtained from the tuber of the *Amorphophallus spp* and should not to be confused with the common yams or taro.

Food prepared principally from konjac has a gelatinous like texture. As well as being an ingredient in food, konjac, may be presented as powders, thread shaped and noodle like preparations (either black or white in colour), as prepared and packaged food that may be sliced and consumed like Sashimi or packaged as prepared deserts in various moulded forms.

ANZFA have advised that konjac is an unapproved additive and as such foods containing it are not permitted to be sold as food in Australia. AQIS will fail any food that is konjac or contains konjac as an ingredient. In this regard importers are advised to ensure that the food they import does not contain konjac or any other unapproved or prohibited additive.

AQIS has requested that the Australian Customs Service place the following declaration question against the most likely tariff classifications under which these foods may be entered.

"Do goods contain the additive konjac, konnyaku, yam flour/powder or taro flour/powder"?

Where the broker/importer has answered 'yes' to the declaration question the direction applied by AIMS will be 'test and release' and in the sample screen the test 'checkadd' will appear. The 'checkadd' test directs officers to check the label of the food product for the presence of the additive konjac, konnyaku, taro flour/powder or yam flour/powder. Please note that no analytical testing is required.

Food identified as containing the additive konjac, konnyaku, yam flour/powder or taro flour/powder is to be deemed failing food. The failed food options available to the importer are re-export, downgrade or destroy. The treatment option is not considered appropriate in this instance.

Due to the broad scope of tariff classifications and no specific tariff existing for food that may contain konjac, konnyaku, taro flour/powder or yam flour/powder, it is possible that foods containing the additive will not be referred by the declaration question. It is therefore important that AQIS inspectors routinely check the label of food referred for the presence of the additive. Where officers have concerns with regard to the additive component of a food product, additional information should be sought from the importer, prior to the food product being released.

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For more information contact the ICON administrator
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URL: http://www.aqis.gov.au/icon32/asp/ex_topiccontent.asp

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