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Consumer Advisory Issued for Ozark Country Sorghum

Date: Tuesday, September 4, 2018



DES MOINES, IA - The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Johnson County Public Health Department, and the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) today issued a consumer advisory for sorghum made by Ozark Country Sorghum in Dunnegan, Missouri. Laboratory tests conducted by the State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) at the University of Iowa indicate the product has "extremely high nitrate levels, which can be hazardous especially if consumed by infants and children," DIA Food and Consumer Safety Bureau Chief Steven Mandernach said.

IDPH and Johnson County health officials are investigating two cases of possible methemoglobinemia associated with the consumption of this sorghum. "The bottom line is that no one should eat this product," said IDPH Medical Director, Dr. Caitlin Pedati. "If you have it in your kitchen, you should throw it away."

Signs and symptoms of methemoglobinemia include shortness of breath, cyanosis, confusion, headache, fatigue, exercise intolerance, weakness and dizziness. Persons with methemoglobinemia should be evaluated by a clinician and are sometimes treated with supplemental oxygen and methylene blue [10] 1% solution.

State officials are working to have the product recalled and to further investigate this product with their counterparts in Missouri. Officials with the Johnson County Public Health Department, too, are investigating an illness associated with the consumption of sorghum. Sorghum is often used by some populations in the preparation of infant formulas and toddler foods.

Consumers who have purchased Pure Missouri Ozark Country Sorghum should throw it out. The sorghum is packaged in one pint and one quart jars and may be available at grocery stores, specialty retail stores, and country stores, or available from online suppliers. Consumers should not return the product to the store.