

Iowa Department of Public Health warns about use of Ozark Country Sorghum product

Testing revealed 'extremely high nitrate levels'



The Gazette

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), along with the Johnson County Public Health Department and Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals, has issued a consumer advisory warning against the usage of sorghum produced by Ozark Country Sorghum based out of Dunnegan, Missouri.

According to an IDPH media release, tests by the State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa revealed that the product has nitrate levels high enough that they “can be hazardous especially if consumed by infants and children.”

According to the release, sorghum is sometimes used in the preparation of infant formulas and toddler foods.

IDPH and Johnson County health officials are investigating two cases of possible methemoglobinemia, blood disorder in which an abnormal amount of methemoglobin is produced, associated with the consumption of this sorghum, according to the release. 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.

“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.”

In addition to investigations in Johnson County, state officials are working to have the product recalled and are investigating the product further with health officials in Missouri.

According to the release, 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, health officials said.