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NCDHHS Urges Caution After Reportable Lead Found in WanaBana Brand Apple Cinnamon Puree

NCDHHS Urges Caution After Finding Reportable Lead in WanaBana Brand Apple Cinnamon Puree

PRESS RELEASE — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today released an advisory for consumers not to buy or feed WanaBana apple cinnamon fruit puree pouches to toddlers and young children because the product may contain elevated levels of lead. This announcement comes after a joint investigation by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, local health departments, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services and the FDA.

RALEIGH

RALEIGH — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today [released an advisory](#) for consumers not to buy or feed WanaBana apple cinnamon fruit puree pouches to toddlers and young children because the product may contain elevated levels of lead. This announcement comes after a joint investigation by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, local health departments, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services and the FDA.

NCDHHS identified WanaBana apple cinnamon fruit puree pouches as a potential shared source of exposure following several cases of elevated blood lead levels in children in the western part of the state. As part of the investigation, NCDHHS analyzed multiple lots of the product, detecting extremely high concentrations of lead. The FDA has reviewed and supports NCDHHS' findings and issued a voluntary recall of all WanaBana apple cinnamon fruit puree pouches regardless of lot code or expiration. WanaBana apple cinnamon fruit puree pouches are sold nationally and are available through multiple retailers including Sam's Club, Amazon and Dollar Tree. WanaBana has also agreed to voluntarily recall all apple cinnamon fruit puree pouches regardless of expiration.



In North Carolina, all blood lead test results for children under the age of 6 are reportable to NCDHHS by [N.C. General Statute 130A-131.8](#). A child under six who has two consecutive blood lead test results greater than or equal to 5 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) is considered to have an elevated lead level and is eligible for a home investigation by NCDHHS and local health department staff to identify the source of the lead hazard. At the same time, the child's health care provider is also notified to monitor their blood lead level to ensure the child's levels decrease below the [CDC reference value of 3.5 \$\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}\$](#) once the identified source is removed. It was during several such investigations that the WanaBana brand of apple cinnamon puree pouches was identified as the likely source of lead hazard.

Lead exposure may cause behavioral, developmental and health problems even at low levels in the blood. Because children under age 6 are undergoing critical neurological and physical development, they are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of lead on the body.

NCDHHS recommends the following for consumers concerned about this report:

- If you have WanaBana brand apple cinnamon puree products in your home, do not eat them or feed them to your children. Dispose of the products immediately.
- Discuss blood lead testing with your medical provider if you are concerned about your child. NCDHHS recommends all children be tested for lead during their well-child visit at age 1 and again at age 2, when hand-to-mouth behavior is highest.
- Choose foods or spices with detailed product labels that allow the products to be traced in the event of a recall or other evidence of contamination.

- Sign up for FDA recall alerts and [Consumer Product Safety Commission recall alerts for heavy metals](#).

To report a complaint or adverse event (illness or serious allergic reaction), you can

- Call an [FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinator](#) if you wish to speak directly to a person about your problem.
- Complete an [electronic Voluntary MedWatch form](#) online.
- Complete a [paper Voluntary MedWatch form](#) that can be mailed to FDA.
- Visit www.fda.gov/fcic for additional consumer and industry assistance.

For more information and resources on child lead poisoning, please visit <https://ehs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/hhccehb/cehu>.

RALEIGH — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today issued a [warning for consumers](#) not to buy or feed bags of WanaBana cinnamon applesauce to young children because the product may contain elevated levels of lead. This announcement comes after a joint investigation by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), local health departments, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

NCDHHS identified WanaBana's bags of applesauce and cinnamon as a possible shared source of exposure after several cases of elevated blood lead levels in children in the western part of the state. As part of the investigation, NCDHHS tested multiple production batches, detecting extremely high concentrations of lead. The FDA has reviewed and endorses NCDHHS's findings and has issued a voluntary recall of all bags of WanaBana cinnamon applesauce, regardless of lot code or expiration date. WanaBana's applesauce cinnamon bags are sold nationally and are available at a number of retailers, including Sam's Club, Amazon, and Dollar Tree. WanaBana has also agreed to voluntarily recall all bags of applesauce and cinnamon, regardless of their expiry date.



In North Carolina, all blood lead test results for children under the age of 6 must be reported to NCDHHS under North [Carolina General Statute 130A-131.8](#). A child under the age of six who has two consecutive blood lead test results, greater than or equal to 5 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$), is considered to have an elevated lead level and is eligible for a home investigation by NCDHHS and local health department staff to identify the source of the lead risk. At the same time, the child's health care provider who monitors the blood lead level is also notified to ensure that the levels in the child decrease to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) reference value to less than 3.5 \$\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}\$](#) once the identified source is removed. It was during several of these investigations that the WanaBana brand of cinnamon and apple puree bags was identified as the likely source of the lead hazard.

Lead exposure can cause behavioral, developmental, and health problems even at low levels in the blood. Because children under the age of 6 are experiencing critical neurological and physical development, they are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of lead on the body.

NCDHHS recommends the following for consumers concerned about this report:

- If you have WanaBana brand cinnamon applesauce products in your home, do not eat them or give them to your children. Dispose of products immediately.
- Discuss blood lead testing with your healthcare provider if your child is concerned. NCDHHS recommends that all children be tested for lead during their well-child visit at age 1 and again at age 2, when hand-to-mouth behavior is highest.
- Choose foods or spices with detailed product labels that allow products to be traced in the event of a recall or other evidence of contamination.

- Sign up for FDA recall alerts and [Consumer Product Safety Commission recall alerts](#) for heavy metals.

To report a complaint or adverse event (illness or severe allergic reaction), you can

- Call an FDA [Consumer Complaint Coordinator](#) if you would like to speak directly with a person about your concern.
- Fill out a [voluntary MedWatch online electronic form](#).
- Fill out a [paper that can be mailed](#) to FDA.
- Visit the website: www.fda.gov/fcic for additional consumer and industry assistance.

For more information and resources about childhood lead poisoning, visit <https://ehs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/hhccehb/cehu>.