Increased controls: arachidonic acid oil from China

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EU increases checks on Chinese arachidonic acid oil

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/459 of 24 February 2026 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1793 as regards the temporary increase of official controls and emergency measures governing the entry into the Union of arachidonic acid oil originating in China

Update

The European Union (EU) has introduced increased controls on imports of arachidonic acid oil from China, used in infant formula, after the toxin cereulide was found in this product. This contamination is suspected to have caused the deaths of two infants. All consignments must now be accompanied by an official certificate showing the absence of cereulide toxin, and 50% of consignments will be checked at the EU border.

Impacted products

Arachidonic acid oil

What is changing?

The EU has introduced urgent new measures in relation to the toxin cereulide found in arachidonic acid oil in infant formula from China. The new requirements (updating Annex II of Regulation 2019/1793 on increased controls and emergency measures) are:

- all consignments of this product coming from China must be accompanied by an official certificate showing the absence of cereulide toxin; the results of sampling and analyses undertaken should be attached to that certificate
- 50% of consignments will be checked at the EU border.

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Why?

Investigations by EU Member States have demonstrated that arachidonic acid oil originating in China was the source of contamination with cereulide toxin. This toxin is a serious risk to human health.

Timeline

This Regulation applies from **26 February 2026**. Consignments of arachidonic acid oil from China entering the EU before that date do not require an official certificate and the results of sampling and analyses. 50% of these consignments will be checked at the EU border.

Background

Cereulide is a toxin produced by certain strains of *Bacillus cereus*. It is resistant to common heat treatments, including pasteurisation and sterilisation, and therefore may remain active in food until the moment of consumption. The consumption of infant formula contaminated by cereulide toxin can cause severe illness in infants or even be fatal.

For an overview of other products that require increased controls or certificates, see Temporary increased official controls on foods from certain countries – January 2026 update.

Resources

Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products

Sources

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/459 as regards the temporary increase of official controls and emergency measures governing the entry into the Union of arachidonic acid oil originating in China

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