

MEDIA RELEASE

Health Warning and Food Recall on ChiTree Apricot Kernel Product

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) have advised the ACT Government Health Directorate of a voluntary recall by a Victorian based company ChiTree for their Apricot Kernels.

“Canberrans are being warned against consuming ChiTree apricot kernels after a sample distributed by a Victorian-based company was found with high levels of a naturally occurring cyanide,” ACT Chief Health Officer Dr Paul Kelly said.

“The company has begun a voluntary recall of ChiTree apricot kernels sold in one kilogram bags and suspended all retail sales, including those made online.

“The recalled product has been available for sale online and in selected health food stores. The Health Protection Service have identified one store within the ACT where the product has been on sale, and have contacted the store to advise of the recall and to ensure that the product is removed from sale.

“The recall of the product is due to high levels of hydrocyanic acid, which is naturally occurring, but can be toxic. Eating this product may cause illness. Historically, there have been health risks associated with naturally occurring hydrocyanic acids in foods, including apricot kernels.

“The primary concern is the sale of the product to the public, as it is unsafe to eat the whole raw kernel. At the level of hydrocyanic acid detected in this product only a small number of apricot kernels would need to be consumed to reach potentially unsafe levels according to published toxicity data.

“The literature contains numerous references over a long period of time to acute poisonings as a consequence of consumption of apricot kernels.

“Consumers who may have bought this product are advised not to eat it and to return the product to the place of sale or contact ChiTree directly,” Dr Kelly concluded.

Consumers with any concerns or questions should contact the Health Protection Service on 6205 1700.

Statement Ends - 31 October, 2011

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