**OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE**

**Public Sector Food Incident Alert – PS Level 1**

This alert was issued by Food Standards Scotland (FSS) on 01/04/2019 under the Public Sector Incident Protocol.

***If you believe that this alert has been sent to you or your organisation in error, please advise FSS, as soon as possible, by emailing*** ***incidents@******fss.scot and await further instructions. Do not distribute this Incident Alert.***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Alert PS Level 1**  | **For Information** |
| **Title** | **GM Ingredient in Vegetable Oil from [source]** |
| **Incident Ref.** | **2019/01**  |
| **Date** | **01/04/2019** |

**Situation Description**

FSS has become aware that a bulk consignment of vegetable oil derived from genetically modified GM soya has been used as an ingredient in a range of branded vegetable oils and delicatessen products.

The GM oil is approved for use in the UK but requires to be declared in lists of ingredients on packaged products and the presence of GM ingredients should be declared to consumers in terms of catering sales. The declaration was not made at the point of first sale of the bulk product and has therefore not been declared in any of the products in which it was used.

The initial manufacturer in <country> has notified customers that it supplied the bulk oil to in a number of European member states. It is expected to take considerable time to trace affected products through the supply chain but a number of major retailers have made a commercial decision to withdraw own-brand oils and products (such as ready meals and salad dressings) in order to preserve brand reputation.

**Risk Assessment**

There is no food safety risk. Trade withdrawals are not currently being publicised but the media are likely to become aware through the unusual pattern stock-out situations that will be apparent across the UK. Retailers may therefore decide to proactively engage with the media at short notice.

**Considerations for Public Bodies**

FSS cannot advise on affected products at this stage but public bodies are asked to consider the following actions:

* An assessment of consumer group sensitivity in their areas (e.g. school children, patients, staff etc.)
* Compiling an inventory of potentially affected products
* Menu items that could be provided where the risk of inclusion of GM oil is negligible

Public bodies are requested to share with FSS and across member bodies any specific information received about affected products through trade withdrawals and any other information that could assist with a coordinated response throughout the public sector in Scotland.