

Richester Foods clears its name of 'tainted lollipops' speculation

Independent lab tests have cleared local sweets manufacturer Richester Foods of claims that its Xpop Energy Red Dragon lollipops had caused a group of children in Kwazulu-Natal to fall ill.



Source: [Rxabay](#)

This follows last week's social media speculation that [at least 46 children](#) from a primary school near Stanger, KZN, had fallen ill and received treatment at a local hospital after allegedly consuming the lollipops bought from a street vendor. Videos surfaced on social media showing the children needing hospital treatment after allegedly eating Richester Foods' Xpop Energy Red Dragon.

Richester Foods subsequently launched an immediate full internal investigation into the matter and submitted lollipops from the product batch in question for independent testing. After performing a microbiological analysis on these samples, however, independent laboratory KLM High-Giene Solutions has verified that the lollipops were free of any bacterial contamination or causes that could relate to ill health.

In a letter, KLM director Khutsiso Kgole states: "We can confirm that, based on the test results supplied (of the specified sample), the product was clear of any of the tested bacteria, thus rendering it microbiologically clean (from the tested organisms/ bacteria)."

Richester Foods managing director Dr Hussein Cassim notes that these results come as a welcome relief, reaffirming the company's rigorous quality, health and safety controls. The results have also been shared with officials from the KZN Department of Health, as well as the National Consumer Council.

"Quality and food safety remain our top priority, and these test results have given proof to the strength of our hygiene and safety practices," he says.



Nestlé recalls Kit Kat products, which may contain glass pieces

4 Feb 2022



Cassim adds that both the Department of Health and NCC were kept informed from the time the allegations were made, up until independent testing results were received exonerating the lollipops.

"Given that the Xpop Energy Red Dragon lollipops have been absolved of any negativity, Richester Foods urges the Department of Health and NCC to look more closely into the matter to find the real cause of the children's illness in order to prevent unfortunate incidents of this nature from happening again."

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