

Salmonella halts production at world's biggest chocolate plant

This week, Swiss group Barry Callebaut detected salmonella in a production lot at its factory in Wieze, Belgium, the largest chocolate plant in the world.



Source: Barry Callebaut

Barry Callebaut is a prominent cocoa processor and chocolate manufacturer that supplies some of the biggest food companies, including Mondelez, Nestle and Unilever.

According to a statement released by the company, its food safety programmes identified lecithin as the source of the contamination. Barry Callebaut informed the Belgian food authorities (FAVV) about the incident and has taken the precautionary measure to stop all chocolate production lines and to block all products manufactured since the time of testing.

"Our quality experts identified lecithin as the source of the contamination. As lecithin is used in all chocolate production, we have taken the precautionary measure to stop all production lines and to block all products manufactured since the time of testing, while we continue the root cause analysis and risk assessment. Out of precaution, we have also asked our customers to block any shipped products," it said.



Barry Callebaut grows focus in Africa, establishing own SA distribution network

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Barry Callebaut described the situation as "a very exceptional case".

"Not only do we have a Food Safety charter and procedure in place, we also have over 20 people working on food safety and quality in Europe. In our local site in Wieze, we train our people to recognise food safety risks. This allowed us to quickly identify the risk and successfully start the root cause analysis.

"Barry Callebaut will now take the time to continue with the very diligent root cause analysis - keeping the FAVV informed in the process. When that is completed the lines will be cleaned and disinfected before resuming the production process," the company said.

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