

NRCS widens recall of canned pilchards

The National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) has ordered all formal wholesalers, retailers and informal traders to remove and stop selling 400g pilchards in tomato sauce and 400g pilchards in chili sauce with immediate effect.



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This follows the outcome of an investigation the NRCS conducted, which revealed a deficiency in the canning process. The affected products bear the markings starting with ZST29 and ZSC29 on top of the cans.

Addressing the media in Tshwane on Tuesday, Food and Associated Industries general manager at the NRCS, Meisie Katz, said they are recalling all products packaged in June 2019. Katz explained that during the packaging of the affected products, they discovered that during the process of the sauce filling step, an incision took place, which makes the cans leak after some time.

She explained that there is no problem with the content, but the problem is with the packaging of the content. "Some of the cans were compromised during the sauce filling step on the production line, therefore could affect the safety of consumers. The problem manifests itself after months of storage, which causes the content of the can to react with the metal of the can," Katz said.

The affected products were manufactured in 2019 by West Point Processors, based in Cape Town and have been distributed nationally to various retailers across the country. Katz said the signs of the affected products show after three to six months from the packaging date.

“Any can leaking can compromise the safety of consumers. We are recalling them. They should not be in the market,” Katz said.

Product brands affected and that are being recalled are:

- Deep Catch
- Mammias
- OK Housebrand
- Prime Ocean
- Spar
- Sunny
- Shoprite Ritebrand
- Cape Point
- Checkers Housebrand
- U Brand
- Saldanha
- West Point

NRCS says that food safety is a priority and the organisation is engaging all role players to ensure that the affected products are removed from the market to protect consumers against unsafe products.

According to Katz, the manufacturer has already started the recall and the NRCS will continue to monitor the process with all the other wholesalers and retailers, including the informal market, to ensure that the process is handled efficiently. Shoprite is one of the retailers that has urged consumers to check their food cupboards and return the recalled product to its stores for a refund.

The NRCS regulates the manufacture, production and treatment of canned fish and fishery products as part of the Compulsory Specifications (VC8014). All canned fish and fishery products that are manufactured in the Republic of South Africa are inspected and released by the NRCS for trade, according to regulatory protocols.

Consumers, who have purchased the products, are urged to check the code. If it starts with ZST29 or ZSC29, they must return it for a full refund.

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