

NewsLetter



Dubious “Dubai Chocolate”

FSA issue warning about non-compliant imports

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have raised concerns about the recent increase in the sale of ‘Dubai Chocolate’ or ‘Dubai-style Chocolate’ in shops and online.

While there are safe and legitimate products on the UK market, there is growing evidence of both unsafe and non-compliant imported products, especially from Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) being sold.

The FSA report that, based on initial incident notifications and surveillance information, many of these imported products are not formulated for the UK market. As such, some brands pose allergen risks, they may contain unauthorised additives, be in contravention of import requirements or may not comply with UK food information requirements more generally, meaning consumers could be at risk from:

- Missing, incorrect or misleading labelling
- Undeclared allergens or un-emphasised allergen information on labels
- Authenticity of ingredients
- Unauthorised food additives

What is “Dubai Chocolate”

Dubai chocolate is a chocolate bar filled with a mixture of pistachio paste and shredded pastry. The distinctive bright green filling has made it a social media sensation and many sales of the product are made online.

Identified non-compliances

The FSA have provided details of the most commonly found non-compliances associated with imported Dubai Chocolate. These include:

- The presence of pathogenic bacteria such as Salmonella spp. and the presence of toxins produced by moulds.
- Undeclared allergens such as sesame, milk, wheat [gluten] and soya
- Chemical contamination such as glycidol in chocolate from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) via Italy.
- Unauthorised use of certain additives such as Lutein (E 161b), this colour is not permitted in chocolate products, but was detected in Kunafa chocolate from Dubai
- Import of pistachios is regulated. Bars have been seen to have between 9 and 30 per cent pistachio content, if originating from Türkiye or Iran and over 21 per cent, the products require a laboratory report and health certificate

The FSA are urging businesses not to place non-compliant products on the market.