



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

26 January 2013

### **New Zealand Government assures safety of country's dairy products**

The New Zealand Government is today assuring all consumers that all New Zealand dairy products are safe.

Ministry for Primary Industries Director-General Wayne McNee says there has been some confusion about the suspension of a pasture treatment, DCD, in New Zealand and what this means for the safety of New Zealand milk products.

"Use of DCD was suspended by its manufacturers because very small traces of residue were unexpectedly detected in New Zealand milk.

"The detection of these small DCD residues poses no food safety risk. DCD itself is not poisonous," Mr McNee says.

"DCD is not used directly in or on food in New Zealand and never has been. It is a product used on pastures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the leaching of nitrogen into waterways.

"DCD manufacturers have voluntarily suspended DCD because New Zealand's international dairy customers expect New Zealand products to be residue-free, where there is no internationally accepted standard for residues for particular compounds. An international standard has yet to be agreed for DCD.

Mr McNee says the European Commission has published an opinion on an acceptable daily intake of DCD. Based on that opinion the highest DCD residue that was detected in New Zealand milk products, a 60 kg person would have to drink more than 130 litres of liquid milk or consume some 60 kg of milk powder to reach the Commission's limit for an acceptable daily intake, and considerably more to have any health effects.

The Ministry says there is only a small amount of dairy product potentially involved in this issue. DCD has been used by less than five percent of the country's dairy farmers who applied it only twice a year. Each application leaves only traces of residue on the grass for no more than a few days. This means only very small numbers of New Zealand cows could have come into contact with DCD in very limited time frames.

"The chance of any residues of DCD being present in milk products processed now is minimal," Mr McNee assures.

"There has been no use of DCD on New Zealand pastures since September 2012, and now that its use has been suspended, it is not possible that any New Zealand dairy produce currently in production will have DCD residues in it."

There has been absolutely no restriction on dairy sales in New Zealand because of this suspension of DCD use on pasture.

DCD is not melamine. It is a different chemical and has none of the toxicity that melamine has.

ENDS

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