



Office of Hon Nikki Kaye

MP for Auckland Central

Minister for Food Safety
Minister of Civil Defence
Minister of Youth Affairs

Associate Minister of Education
Associate Minister of Immigration

Min13-0678

17 DEC 2013

Jean Kahui
67 Kotare Street
WAIKANAE 5036
jeankahui@hotmail.com

Dear Jean Kahui

Thank you for your correspondence of 31 October 2013 addressed to Hon Tony Ryall expressing your concern about the contamination of a number of Fonterra milk tankers with drilling dirt. Your email has been passed to me as the Minister for Food Safety.

I appreciate your concern about a truck and trailer said to be carrying contaminated waste being mistaken for a milk tanker, and the impact on the safety of milk.

I have enclosed a response from the Ministry for Primary Industries addressing this issue.

Yours sincerely

Hon Nikki Kaye
Minister for Food Safety



Min13-0678

Jean Kahui
67 Kotare Street
WAIKANAE 5036
jeankahui@hotmail.com

Dear Jean Kahui

Thank you for your email to Hon Nikki Kaye, Minister for Food Safety dated 31 October 2013 expressing your concern about the contamination of a number of Fonterra milk tankers with drilling dirt.

First, I would like to clarify that the tanker that was involved in the contamination was not carrying contaminated waste when it was attached to Fonterra's Clean in Place (CIP) cleaning system. The tanker had been emptied prior to cleaning. The concern was that the tanker should never have been connected to a food system as it was not a food-grade tanker and was likely to have residual levels of drilling waste from its previous use.

In your email you have asked that the Minister "enquire on the public's behalf" about the following:

- (a) "How could a vehicle carrying such waste be mistaken for milk tanker?"; and
- (b) "What were the documented contents of the waste truck (as 'mud' is a huge understatement), and where were the contents dumped?"

The error occurred when a dispatcher from a company hired by Fonterra to dispose of waste milk assigned the driver to a truck which he mistakenly thought to be pulling a food grade tanker. The truck was in fact pulling the non-food grade tanker.

The tanker itself was empty but did contain a small amount of residual waste (mud and gravel).

There is a normal procedure, covered by law, for dealing with incidents in the dairy industry that requires companies to undertake its own investigation, and this investigation is overseen by an independent verifier. If dairy product is affected, the decision on the fate of the product is made by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

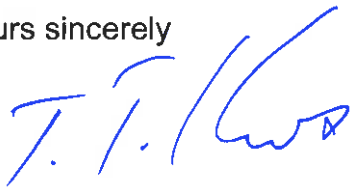
I can assure you that there are no food safety risks as a result of this incident. While six of the fourteen potentially-affected tankers, which were connected to the same cleaning system as the non-food grade tanker, were dispatched to pick up raw milk from farms, this raw milk was disposed of at a waste treatment plant. The Taranaki Regional Council confirmed to MPI that this disposal was done in accordance with Fonterra's resource consent.

One additional tanker was being cleaned at the same time as the contaminated tanker and it was subsequently dispatched to collect milk. MPI was most concerned about the milk from this tanker as it had gone through the manufacturing system. All product streams from this potentially-contaminated milk were identified and locked down. These products have now been tested and found to be unaffected.

In regards to Fonterra's legal responsibilities to comply with its Risk Management Programme, and to report such incident to AsureQuality and MPI, MPI is satisfied that Fonterra followed the appropriate process.

Once again, thank you for writing and I hope my response addresses your concerns.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Knox', is written over the typed name.

Tim Knox
Director Market Assurance