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MEDIA RELEASE

Fonterra
Dairy for life

3 August 2013

MEDIA RELEASE - FONTERRA ADVISES OF QUALITY ISSUE

Fonterra today advised eight of its customers of a quality issue involving three batches of a particular type of whey protein concentrate (WPC80) produced at a single New Zealand manufacturing site in May 2012.

As a result, these customers are urgently investigating whether any of the affected product, which contains a strain of Clostridium, is in their supply chains. If need be, they will initiate consumer product recalls.

There have been no reports of any illness linked to consumption of the affected whey protein. Dairy products such as fresh milk, yoghurt, cheese, spreads and UHT milk products are not affected.

Fonterra Chief Executive Theo Spierings today said: "Food safety is Fonterra's number one priority. We take matters of public health extremely seriously and we are doing everything we can to assist our customers in ensuring any product containing this ingredient is removed from the marketplace and that the public is made aware.

"We are acting quickly. Our focus is to get information out about potentially affected product as fast as possible so that it can be taken off supermarket shelves and, where it has already been purchased, can be returned," Mr Spierings said.

"We are working closely with New Zealand's regulatory authority – the Ministry for Primary Industries – to keep New Zealand and offshore regulators informed."

Fonterra initially identified a potential quality issue in March this year, when a product tested positive for Clostridium. There are hundreds of different strains of Clostridium, the majority of which are harmless.

Product samples were put through intensive testing over the following months. On Wednesday 31 July 2013, tests indicated the potential presence of a strain of Clostridium (*Clostridium Botulinum)* in a sample, which can cause botulism.

The particular whey protein concentrate concerned (WPC80) is used by Fonterra's customers in a range of products including infant formula, growing up milk powder and sports drinks, said Gary Romano, Managing Director NZ Milk Products.

"For this reason, we immediately contacted our customers and the appropriate authorities, so that any potentially affected product could be removed from the marketplace.

"We are working with our customers and will provide more information and updates as they become available," Mr Romano said.

Any consumer product recalls that may need to take place will be initiated by the respective food companies.

- ENDS -

For further information contact:
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About Fonterra

Fonterra is a global leader in dairy nutrition – the preferred supplier of dairy ingredients to many of the world's leading food companies. Fonterra is also a market leader with our own consumer dairy brands in Australia/New Zealand, Asia/Africa, Middle East and Latin America.

The farmer-owned New Zealand co-operative is the largest processor of milk in the world, producing more than two million tonnes of dairy ingredients, value added dairy ingredients, specialty ingredients and consumer products every year. Drawing on generations of dairy expertise, Fonterra is one of the largest investors in dairy based research and innovation in the world. Our more than 16,000 staff work across the dairy spectrum from advising farmers on sustainable farming and milk production, to ensuring we live up to exacting quality standards and delivering every day on our customer promise in more than 100 markets around the world.

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