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**For Immediate Release**

## **Imported food products pose greater risk for food allergic individuals**

**Individuals at risk of food anaphylaxis need to seriously consider the safety of imported food products if they have food allergy.**

A recent increase in food recalls for undeclared peanut in imported products has triggered concern for many peanut allergic individuals (see FSANZ [www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/foodrecalls/](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/foodrecalls/) and Anaphylaxis Australia, Food Alerts [www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au)).

Whilst foods imported into Australia are required to abide by Australian food labelling law, it is important for consumers to understand the principle that manufacturing and labelling standards may, in reality, not be the same as they are in Australia.

“After seven reported severe allergic reactions and the recall of eleven products since January 2011 due to the undeclared presence of peanut from cross contamination, advice from Anaphylaxis Australia is for peanut allergic individuals to avoid imported food products from China that contain soy flour,” stated Maria Said, president of Anaphylaxis Australia.

The Australian food industry importing or manufacturing products overseas has been advised to investigate allergen management practices of overseas manufacturers and ingredient suppliers, including cleaning of equipment, and to request allergen testing of finished food products as part of their quality assurance program. The industry has also been advised that products should also be tested in Australia using credible allergen testing laboratories.

This is also a timely reminder that anyone with food allergy should always carry their adrenaline autoinjector (EpiPen® or Anapen®) and Action Plan for Anaphylaxis because accidental exposure is never planned. “Do what you can to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction but always be prepared in case of an unexpected emergency,” concluded Ms Said.

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**Anaphylaxis Australia Inc** is a non-profit Australian charity which was formed in 1993. AAI's mission is to increase awareness of anaphylaxis through education, research and support. The organisation works with health and teaching professionals, members of the food industry and all who are touched by life-threatening allergy so that, together, we can improve the quality of life of Australians with allergies, nationally.

For more information visit the AAI website: [www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au) or call 1300 728 000.