

SAFEGUARDS

SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

FOOD

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CHINA PROHIBITS PRODUCTION AND SALE OF RACTOPAMINE

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the People's Republic of China, Ministry of agriculture, Ministry of commerce, Ministry of health, the state of administration for industry & commerce, general administration of quality supervision, inspection and quarantine published a bulletin on December 5th, 2011, announcing a ban on the production and sale of ractopamine.

Ractopamine is a synthetic beta-adrenoceptor agonist (nerve stimulant). The drug is used as a feed additive to promote leanness in pigs raised for their meat.

Ractopamine accelerates muscle growth and reduces adipose accumulation in pigs.

The drug is being called a new type of "Clenbuterol" and is similar to drugs such as Dopamine Hydrochloride or Salbutamol.

Globally the safety regulations of ractopamine in meat production vary. Ractopamine is not approved for use as a veterinary drug in most countries, 160 countries ban the use of ractopamine. The European Union has specifically banned the use of all drugs belonging to the beta-agonist category. This ban for use in food producing animals in the EU, with some exceptions for therapeutic purposes, is sited in EC Directive 96/22/EC¹. At present, only 24 countries such as the United States, Canada and Brazil allow the use of ractopamine in food producing animals. The purpose is mainly to improve the lean meat percentage in these animals. In the United States the maximum residue limits of ractopamine in swine muscle meat for food is 50 ppb².

In China, ractopamine has specifically been listed in "Banned drugs in feed and animals water" since 2002. According to the relevant provisions of the State Council,

the production and marketing of ractopamine has been banned in China since December 5th, 2011.

SGS has food laboratories worldwide which can test for beta-agonist drug residues including ractopamine. In mainland China, SGS has the testing capability to follow national and Ministry of Agriculture standard methods, for various matrixes, such as meat and poultry products, dairy products and seafood, at detection levels at 0.01 ppb.

¹ [EFSA evaluates safety of Ractopamine in feed](#)

² [CFR - Code of Federal Regulations Title 21](#)

FOR ENQUIRIES:

Global Competence Support Centre: gcsc@sgs.com
CN – Roy Zhao Tel: +86 21 61072711 or Roy.Zhao@sgs.com

Asia – Hong Kong. Tel: +852 2334 4481 Fax: +852 2144 7001 mktg.hk@sgs.com
Australasia – Perth. Tel: +61 (0) 3 9790 3418 Fax: +61 (0) 3 9701 0988 au.cts@sgs.com
Europe – London – UK. Tel: +44(0) 203 008 7860 Fax: +44 (0) 203 00 7870 gb.cts.sales@sgs.com
Africa & Middle East – Turkey. Tel: +90 212 368 40 00 Fax: +90 212 296 47 82 sgs.turkey@sgs.com
Americas – USA. Tel: +1 973 575 5252 Fax: +1 973 575 7175 uscts.inquiries@sgs.com

www.sgs.com/cts Global Competence Support Centre: gcsc@sgs.com
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