

Ministerial talking points: Nano-sized particles in infant formula

- The Government and FSANZ take concerns about food safety extremely seriously.
- All infant formula products sold in Australia and New Zealand must meet stringent requirements set out in the infant formula standard in the Food Standards Code. This is one of the most comprehensive standards in the Code.
- FSANZ reviewed the information provided including consultation with independent scientific experts and the Scientific Nanotechnology Advisory Group.
- FSANZ concluded there was no new evidence to suggest the products posed a risk to infant health and safety.
- The information from the FoE testing does not provide sufficient evidence that the particles found in the study are intentionally engineered and deliberately added.
- FSANZ has stated that carers of infants should not be alarmed or concerned about the safety of these products
- It is important to note that nano-size particles may not be the result of intentional addition (e.g. as an additive), some are naturally occurring and others may be produced during processing.
- Further, the presence of something, whether on the nanoscale or not, in a food that does not have a permission in the code does not mean a food is unsafe.
- The Code requires new food additives, nutritive and novel substances proposed to be used in infant formula to undergo a pre-market safety assessment.
- FSANZ does not have a role in enforcement and compliance with the Code. In Australia, state or territory government agencies and in many cases local councils are responsible for enforcing and interpreting the Code.
- A food recall is undertaken to remove unsafe food from distribution, sale and consumption. While, FSANZ is not an enforcement agency and does not have the power under its legislation to initiate a recall they have no safety concern with these products.