

19 Apr 2013

To Processed Food & Traditional Chinese Medicines (TCM) herbs importers & exporters

**ADVISORY ON COOLING DRINKS MISLABELLED AS SAIGA ANTELOPE DRINKS**

The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) has noted that bottled cooling drinks mislabeled as Saiga antelope horns drinks were distributed locally by processed food importers and TCM herbs importers for sale in some retail shops.

2 Saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica* and *Saiga borealis*) is protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and is also a scheduled species listed under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act (ESA) 2006. This means that the import, export or re-export of this species and its parts and derivatives requires a permit issued by the AVA. Under the ESA, any person who has in his possession, sells, offers or displays to the public any Saiga antelope parts and products which have been imported without a permit from AVA commits an offence. The offender shall be liable on conviction to a fine of up to \$50,000 per specimen (but not exceeding an aggregate of \$500,000) and/or a jail term of up to 2 years. The same penalties would apply if anyone sells, offers, or displays to the public any non-CITES animal parts (eg. sheep/goat horns) and products (eg. cooling drinks) purported to be from or labeled as CITES specimens (eg. Saiga horns).

3 We note that cooling drinks sold by some retail shops were acquired from processed food and TCM herbs importers. The cooling drinks were derived from horns of non-CITES animals such as sheep or goat but labeled as containing the Saiga antelope horns. We would like to remind all processed food and TCM herbs distributors to properly label products so as not to mislead consumers. If you are importing and distributing products that contain CITES-listed species, you are required to obtain a CITES export/re-export permit issued by the relevant authorities from the exporting/re-exporting country and apply for a CITES import permit from AVA prior to the import. Please note that you are required to comply with any additional import requirements such as health requirements, customs declaration through TradeNet, and obtain the necessary approval from the relevant agencies (eg. Health Sciences Authority (HSA)) for the import.

4 If you are trading in or in possession of CITES-listed species such as Saiga antelope horns that are legally acquired or imported (ie. with CITES permits), please keep proper stock records as you may be required to present them to AVA officers for verification during our visits. Please also keep records of sales of Saiga antelope horns and products between your company and other traders/shops by issuing letter of transfer (LOT) or invoices/receipts. The LOT must indicate the name, address and contact details of the seller and buyer, date of transaction, the species name (scientific and common names) of the products, types and quantity of products. These records would need to be produced as proof of legal acquisition of the Saiga antelope horns in your possession when required to do so.

5 The above are for your compliance and noting. Please feel free to contact us at tel: 6227 0670 if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



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