



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

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Required Report - public distribution

**Date:** 2/24/2005

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## United Kingdom

### Food Processing Ingredients Sector

### Sudan I – Chronology of events in UK food scare

**2005**

**Approved by:**

Peter O. Kurz  
U.S. Embassy

**Prepared by:**

Steve Knight

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**Report Highlights:**

The chronology of events leading up to the UK's Sudan I food scare are starting to become clearer.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
London [UK1]  
[UK]

According to the February 24, 2005 edition of The Times, the chain of events leading to the largest ever recall of food products in the UK is starting to become clearer. Per the attached chronology lifted from the article, the chilli spice contaminated with Sudan I was originally imported from India before the EU introduced mandatory checks for the substance. Interestingly, in 2003 a UK recall was issued on chilli powder due to a Sudan I scare but this consignment somehow escaped the attention of the UK authorities. As such, once the trail of the suspect dye has been officially confirmed, it is expected the attention of the UK authorities will turn to how this oversight occurred and whether any other consignments could similarly have been missed. Questions will also likely be raised as to the adequacy of the routine domestic testing regime.

## POWDER PLOT TRAIL



**2005**

**JANUARY**  
Premier Foods HQ at St Albans contacted by Italian customer to say that authorities have detected Sudan I in its products. Firm starts ingredients check and the trail leads to the chilli consignment

**FEBRUARY 2**  
Premier Foods contacts trading standards and the sauce is sent for testing

**FEBRUARY 7**  
Test confirms Sudan I in Worcester sauce and FSA informed. Premier asks for advice on when to inform consumers. The watchdog asks for more information

**FEBRUARY 11**  
Premier compiles list of 184 customers using sauce in ready meals

**FEBRUARY 14**  
Initial list sent to FSA. Food industry, manufacturers and supermarkets informed of the problem. Firms check items and massive recall is ordered

**FEBRUARY 17**  
Supermarkets clear shelves of suspect products

**FEBRUARY 18**  
Trading standards officers informed of recall to alert corner shops and smaller retail outlets  
1.30p.m. FSA announces recall of 350 items

**FEBRUARY 19**  
Walkers recall Worcester sauce flavour crisps

**FEBRUARY 21**  
FSA announces another 59 products

**FEBRUARY 22**  
Ten more items added to list and scare spreads to hospitals and schools. Document filed at Companies House suggests EW Spice has applied to be struck off the register and is to be dissolved

**2002**

Volga Spice of Bombay send 5 tonnes of chilli powder coloured with Sudan I to Gautam Export Corporation, which has an order from EW Spice, registered at Southernhay Avenue, Leicester, home of Ashok and Sulabha Joshi, husband and wife who are directors in the company

**SEPTEMBER 12**  
Arrives at East Anglia Food Ingredients, of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex

**SEPTEMBER 20**  
Delivered to World of Spice, Billericay, a sister company of Unbar Rothon. Powder sent to the Crosse & Blackwell Worcester sauce factory owned by Premier Foods at Middleton, Manchester





**2003**

**JUNE**  
French authorities find Sudan I in chilli powder. Food Standards Agency issues alert

**JULY**  
EU orders testing of all imports of chilli powder from India. East Anglia Food Ingredients orders recall of all previous supplies of chilli powder. Sudan I found in spices supplied to TRS wholesale company of London, and BE International, makers of Rajah ready meals. World of Spice/Unbar Rothon conduct tests of its chilli powder bought from EAFI; it is free of Sudan I. EAFI paid out £361,705 in compensation to TRS wholesale and BE International. EAFI tries to recoup losses and lodges claim against EW Spice. It is still in discussions with loss adjusters

**SEPTEMBER**  
Premier Foods uses the powder in Crosse & Blackwell Worcester Sauce