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Bottled water used in Singapore meets safety standards: AVA



The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority's statement was in response to a study by a US-based non-profit media collective, which found that bottled water from the world's leading brands is contaminated with tiny plastic particles. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

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SINGAPORE - Routine laboratory tests by the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) show that bottled water that is used in Singapore meets safety standards, the authority said in a statement to The Straits Times on Friday (March 16).

This was in response to a study by Orb Media, a US-based non-profit media collective, which [found that bottled water from the world's leading brands is contaminated with tiny plastic particles](#).

The study said that plastic particles are probably seeping in during the packaging process.

Researchers tested 250 bottles from Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Thailand and the United States, and found 93 per cent of the samples tainted with plastic particles.

In response to the study, the AVA said that it will continue to “monitor international scientific developments on the issue of microplastics and conduct its risk assessment.

“We will implement appropriate measures to safeguard the health of our consumers when necessary,” it added.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said that it was aware that microplastics is an emerging area of concern, although there was not yet any evidence on impacts on human health. The WHO will conduct an assessment to investigate the potential health risk of microplastics in drinking water.

On the surveillance of bottled water in Singapore, the AVA said it adopts a “risk-based approach” in ensuring food safety.

“Food available in our market, including bottled water, are subjected to inspection, sampling and surveillance to ensure compliance with our food safety standards and requirements,” it added.

Mineral and drinking water that is packaged or bottled abroad must be accompanied with a certificate of analysis to indicate that the product is safe for consumption, it added. For new brands, licensed importers must also submit a certificate of authenticity for the source.

Licensed manufacturers of locally packaged or bottled drinking water are subjected to regular AVA inspections to ensure good manufacturing practices.

The brands that Orb Media tested in the study were: Aqua, Aquafina, Bisleri, Dasani, Epura, Evian, Gerolsteiner, Minalba, Nestlé Pure Life, San Pellegrino and Wahaha.

A spokesman for Coca-Cola, which owns the Dasani brand, said that it stands by the safety of its products. “The quality of our products and safety of our consumers are of paramount importance to us and we take them extremely seriously,” it said.

“All our Dasani products sold in Singapore are packaged in and imported from Malaysia, and they comply fully with all laws and regulations in Singapore, including the Sale of Food Act.

“We stand by the safety of our products, and welcome continued study of plastics in our environment.”