

*Food Safety Citizens' Watch was established in April 2003 as a network of experts to monitor developments and make proposals to the government regarding food safety issues from the citizen's point of view*

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**Press Release**

**The Chinese Meat Dumplings Scandal:  
The Responsibility of the Government must be Questioned**

It was reported today that five people including children in Ichikawa-shi, Chiba prefecture had been hospitalized due to food poisoning after eating frozen meat dumplings purchased in a supermarket in the same city. The organic phosphorus chemical, Methamidophos, which is prohibited in Japan, was found in the dumplings. Already on January 5, 2008 a similar food poisoning case occurred in Hyogo prefecture, caused by the same type of frozen food sold at Ito Yokado. However, information about that event had not been properly conveyed to the public. In the Chiba case, it took more than one week until the laboratory testing results obtained on January 22, 2008 were announced.

In this case, as a food poisoning incident, the distribution of food which has the potential to cause harm should have been stopped immediately. This kind of problem arises as a result of insufficient import controls and quarantine systems. At the same time, we must seriously question the responsibility of the government, which did not rapidly make all information known to the public. Now, consumers cannot feel assured about the safety of the food we eat. As this case is now under investigation, efforts should also be made to prevent that such incidents reoccur. Under these circumstances, Food Safety Citizens' Watch strongly and seriously questions the responsibility of the government.

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