



**BEYOND GOOD.**

## Beyond Good Cadmium Response

Cadmium is a natural element that is present in three main environmental compartments, air, water, and soil. Trace levels of minerals like lead and cadmium are naturally occurring in our product because they are naturally occurring in the organic soil from in which our organic cocoa grows. Cocoa plants take up cadmium from soils via their roots and deposit it in the nibs (center) of cocoa beans.

Dark chocolate with naturally occurring trace elements of cadmium is safe to eat. Many other foods contain naturally occurring cadmium, including cereals and bread, leafy vegetables, potatoes, legumes and nuts, and stem/root vegetables<sup>1</sup>. These foods, like dark chocolate, are of course all safe to eat.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a cadmium intake level of 406 µg per kg per week for a 155 lb. person<sup>2</sup>. A 155 lb. individual has to consume roughly 32 Beyond Good chocolate bars per week to exceed the recommended weekly intake of cadmium.

Our products mentioned in the Consumer Reports article meet the settlement limits and are in compliance with strict quality and safety requirements of the U.S. FDA and California's Proposition 65.

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<sup>1</sup> Kim K, Melough MM, Vance TM, Noh H, Koo SI, Chun OK. Dietary Cadmium Intake and Sources in the US. *Nutrients*. 2018 Dec 20;11(1):2. doi: 10.3390/nu11010002. PMID: 30577418; PMCID: PMC6356330.

<sup>2</sup> Satarug S, Vesey DA, Gobe GC. Health Risk Assessment of Dietary Cadmium Intake: Do Current Guidelines Indicate How Much is Safe? *Environ Health Perspect*. 2017 Mar;125(3):284-288. doi: 10.1289/EHP108. Epub 2017 Mar 1. PMID: 28248635; PMCID: PMC5332171.



## BEYOND GOOD.

### Q&A

- 1. Q: What practices does your brand currently employ to ensure that your products are safe and free of harmful heavy metals?**

A: We test for presence of heavy metals 1x per year. Our chocolate is safe. It has naturally occurring levels of cadmium and lead. These are not harmful to human consumption. All of our products are in compliance with strict quality and safety requirements of the U.S. FDA and California's Proposition 65.

- 2. Q: Do you all test finished products for heavy metals?**

A: Yes – 1x per year.

- 3. Q: What practices does your brand employ in your sourcing to ensure that your suppliers are testing for the presence of harmful heavy metals?**

A: Cocoa farmers are our suppliers. We source directly from over 100 cocoa farmers, most of whom are considered smallholders. It is not possible or practical for cocoa farmers to test the mineral composition of their soil for levels of lead and cadmium, which are not harmful when consumed in recommended quantities. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO), the tolerable cadmium intake level is 25 µg per kg body weight per month (0.83 µg/kg body weight/day or 58 µg/day for a 70-kg person). A 155 lb. person must consume our 2.64 oz 70% Pure Dark chocolate bar in approximately the following amounts to exceed the tolerable cadmium intake: over 4.5 chocolate bars a day; 31.5 chocolate bars a week; 135 chocolate bars a month.

- 4. Q: Does your brand currently offer any products that have reliably and consistently tested below California's Maximum Allowable Dose Levels for these metals? If so, which products?**

A: All of our products are tested once a year and in compliance with strict quality and safety requirements of the U.S. FDA and California's Proposition 65.

- 5. Q: What changes in sourcing/testing are underway or planned as a result of Consumer Reports' research?**

A: We are not changing sourcing as a result of the Consumer Report's research. The Consumer Reports study cites guidelines from the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), which are not food safety standards. In addition, the cadmium levels they provide in the study are well under the limits established by the California Proposition 65 settlement.

- 6. Q: Solving the heavy metal contamination issue is an industrywide issue. Is your brand working with any industry groups/brand coalitions to solve this challenge?**

A: We are working with the National Confectioners Association and the FDA to ensure all products are in compliance with strict quality and safety requirements of the U.S. FDA and California's Proposition 65. Heavy metals found in chocolate is not a "contamination" issue. It is not a food safety issue. The far greater issues in the chocolate industry are the intense human poverty, deforestation, and environmental destruction caused by the industrial chocolate supply chain. These are the causes our brand is dedicated to solving.