



## RESPONSES TO NCG HEAVY METAL QUESTIONS

1.9.2023

1. What practices does your brand currently employ to ensure that your products are safe and free of harmful heavy metals?
  - a. We have a cacao testing protocol and processing management program for controlling and monitoring heavy metal content in our chocolate. We comply with all US and EU food safety regulations.
2. Do you all test finished products for heavy metals?
  - a. Instead of testing our finished products, we test our raw materials—our cacao by origin—for lead and cadmium and factor that into our origin blend for recipes to ensure that our product is safe.
3. What practices does your brand employ in your sourcing to ensure that your suppliers are testing for the presence of harmful heavy metals?
  - a. As a bean-to-bar chocolate maker with the mission to make and share stone ground chocolate that is seriously good and fair for all, we know that we need to source high quality cacao to make seriously good chocolate. That is why we developed the first third-party verified Direct Trade Certified Cacao program, and we work closely with a few select cacao growing partners. Before we start working with a new origin, we visit their operations to ensure that their post harvesting process, which as mentioned in the Consumer Report's article can impact heavy metal content, will yield the highest quality cacao. While our growing partners invest heavily in their operations—from harvest through process—they do not test for heavy metals. We test before we start working with a new origin and on an ongoing basis.
4. 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. We test our raw materials to ensure that our finished products consistently test below California's Maximum Allowable Dose Levels for heavy metals.
5. What changes in sourcing/testing are underway or planned as a result of Consumer Reports' research?
  - a. Consumer Reports identified our product as a safer choice, so we are gratified to receive external confirmation that our current protocols are effective. However, we believe in constantly striving for improvement, so we are in the process of updating our heavy metals SOP to include increased testing



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frequency. We do not have any changes underway in our sourcing because the cacao that we source all meets the MADL for Prop 65 and EU food safety regulations.

6. Solving the heavy metal contamination issue is an industry wide issue. Is your brand working with any industry groups/brand coalitions to solve this challenge?
  - a. Yes, we discuss these issues with our growing partners. We also discuss these issues with our colleagues at [Uncommon Cacao](#).



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