

New Zealand fines \$28,000 to food importer over failure of proper labelling

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The Auckland importers of food products who failed to translate food allergen declarations into English have been fined a total of \$28,000.

In the Auckland District Court, Tokyo Food Company Limited was sentenced on 2 charges under the Food Act, which pleaded guilty to and Japan Mart 2014 Company Limited, was sentenced on one charge under the Food Act, it pleaded guilty to, following a successful prosecution by New Zealand Food Safety compliance investigators.

Tokyo Food Company Limited was fined \$21,000 and Japan Mart 2014 Company Limited was fined \$7,000.

"Tokyo Food Company Limited and Japan Mart 2014 Company Limited are New Zealand registered companies and we'd expect them to have known they needed to declare on the labelling that the product contained soy sauce or fish products, in English, so that people who suffer from allergies are aware," says Vincent Arbuckle New Zealand Food Safety deputy director general.

"Our responsibility is to consumers and their safety. People should expect to feel confident that all imported food is subject to consistently high safety standards and is fit for purpose. When we find evidence of non-compliance, such as not declaring ingredients that could potentially affect the health of consumers, we will take action, including removing products from shelves, and in serious cases, placing the offending before the Courts."

"In August 2023, New Zealand Food Safety strengthened the requirements for all New Zealand food importers. The changes clarify the role and responsibilities of food importers when they bring food into New Zealand, to ensure that the food is safe and suitable for Kiwi consumers. We encourage all registered food importers to go and check the Ministry for Primary Industries website to make sure they are following the updated rules," says Vincent Arbuckle.