

Arsenic in Apple Juice: Myth versus Reality

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Naturally occurring arsenic occurs at trace concentrations in apple juice. Since 2009 there have been isolated reports of arsenic concentrations in commercial samples of apple juice that exceed USEPA's maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic in drinking water. Public concern became focused on such reports in October 2011 in response to a feature presentation on a popular daytime television show. In response to that concern, USFDA and the juice producers retested the apple juice samples and reported results that exceeded neither USEPA's arsenic MCL nor USFDA's level of concern for arsenic in juice. This presentation will compare the different arsenic concentrations reported in apple juice, the federal agencies' different health-based exposure limits, and the conclusions about risk that were drawn, evaluating the sources of the differences. In this case, risk communication messages were influenced strongly by the analytic methodologies used and the federal contaminant limit comparisons chosen.