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**MADIGAN CALLS ON FDA TO ADOPT STANDARDS ON ARSENIC IN FOOD***Attorney General Urges Agency to Move Ahead With Plan To Help Inform Parents About Safe Food Choices for Infants*

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today again called on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to establish national standards for arsenic in food, particularly in products served to infants and children.

In September 2012, Madigan alerted the FDA to the presence of arsenic in infant rice cereals after research conducted by her office produced results similar to a national study by Consumer Reports, showing troubling levels of inorganic – or toxic – arsenic in samples of infant rice cereals. Based on those test results, the Attorney General urged the FDA to move quickly at the time to adopt standards on inorganic arsenic in food, particularly in baby food. In response, the FDA informed the Attorney General that it would complete its own analysis of the arsenic levels in food products by the end of 2012, with next steps to "follow promptly." Those steps have not been completed.

[In a letter sent today to the FDA](#), Madigan again urged the agency to act, noting that further delay of a national standard for arsenic in food would leave parents and caregivers without guidance on how to assess potential risks to their children.

"Parents need to be able to make informed choices about what they are feeding their children," Madigan said. "The FDA recognizes the seriousness of this issue but has not yet completed its work. I am calling on the FDA once again to take action because further delay only adds to parents' concerns about whether they're unknowingly exposing their children to potential health risks."

Arsenic is a heavy metal found in soil and bedrock that takes on two forms – organic and inorganic. Inorganic arsenic is considered a toxic chemical and a known carcinogen. The toxin is most often used for industrial and agricultural uses, particularly as a pesticide. Madigan encouraged parents and caregivers to moderate servings of rice in their children's diet until the FDA issues its guidance.

In 2012, Madigan's office provided rice products to laboratories for arsenic testing in light of tests conducted by Consumer Reports that showed the presence of arsenic in apple juice and studies by researchers at Dartmouth that detected arsenic in brown rice syrup.

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