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Dear Health Care Provider,

You may be aware that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently released their risk assessment regarding exposure to arsenic from rice and rice based foods and possible health effects in infants and young children. We realize the FDA announcement may be concerning to your patients and would like to provide you with information on the safety of Gerber Rice cereals.

Arsenic is present naturally in soil and water, and as a result may be found in certain crops including rice. Gerber has been working closely with our trusted rice supplier and their growers to source rice with some of the lowest levels of arsenic in the industry. As a result, our Gerber infant rice cereals adhere to the European Union (EU) limit for inorganic arsenic in rice used in foods for infant and young children. Finalized in 2016, the EU level of 100 ppb inorganic arsenic is among the strictest standards in the world and represents the most recent available guidance on safe levels of arsenic in rice foods.

Generations of babies have benefited from Gerber infant cereals because they provide iron and many other nutrients important for infant growth and development. The Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the USDA Women Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition program all advise on the use of iron fortified infant cereal to help ensure adequate iron intake by infants to help prevent iron deficiency. Iron deficiency remains a problem in the U.S. with prevalence as high as 15.9% among children 1-2 years of age¹. Iron deficiency as you know is associated with multiple morbidities including iron deficiency anemia, developmental delays and decreased cognitive performance, some of which may persist well into older childhood. Two daily servings of iron fortified infant cereals provide 90% of an infant's daily requirements.

The American Academy of Pediatrics guidance states that starting around the middle of the first year babies should eat a balanced diet including iron fortified infant cereals from a variety of grains. At Gerber, we provide iron rich cereals in a variety of grains, such as oatmeal, wheat, rice and multigrain and recommend infants continue consumption of iron fortified infant cereal through twelve months of age to ensure adequate intakes of iron.

Gerber supports the on-going efforts of the FDA to ensure the safety of the food supply. Our number one priority has been and continues to be the health and well being of all babies. Please feel free to have your parents who have questions about Gerber products call our Parent Resource Center at 800-487-7763, day or night. Additionally if you have a medical or scientific question about our infant cereal, please contact us at 855-437-8664.

Sincerely,

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¹United States Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2020 nutrition and weight status objectives. Available at: https://www.healthypeople.gov/node/4953/data_details. Accessed March 3, 2016.