

	<b>Valrhona statement on lead and cadmium level in dark chocolate</b>	Update	April 9, 2024
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***Providing our customers and consumers safe and high-quality products is our top priority. In order to achieve this goal, we follow HACCP method (FSSC 22000 certified), to demonstrate our ability to identify and control hazards to ensure the safety of our products. We also ensure strict compliance with FDA safety requirements.***

*Because it is well-known that cacao beans (and other botanical products) may absorb cadmium from the soil in which they are grown, for many years, we have been monitoring the cacao beans we use and the chocolate couverture we produce for trace levels of cadmium but also many other chemicals including lead. These analyses are conducted following a statistical analysis plan by an external accredited laboratory, COFRAC (recognized international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2005). Our analysis results demonstrate that **all of our products are in compliance with strict quality and safety requirements of the U.S., both federal and state.***

*In 2018, the chocolate and cocoa industry agreed to a Consent Judgment in California. The Superior Court of the State of California, San Francisco County, granted a motion to enter the Consent Judgment on February 14, 2018, which remains in effect. The Consent Judgment established maximum concentration levels for both lead and cadmium in cocoa and chocolate products that supersede the California Proposition 65 MADLs, and above which a requirement for a product label warning would be triggered. As a reminder, Valrhona has opted-in and signed this Consent Judgment. Please find below the trigger levels for lead and cadmium that have been established above which would trigger a warning to appear on product labels:*

<b><i>Cacao percentage in product</i></b>	<b><i>Lead concentration above which a warning is required in parts per million (mg/kg)</i></b>	<b><i>Cadmium concentration above which a warning is required in parts per million (mg/kg)</i></b>
Up to 65%	0.100 mg/kg	0.400 mg/kg
More than 65% and up to 95%	0.150 mg/kg	0.450 mg/kg
More than 95%	0.225 mg/kg	0.960 mg/kg

*We guarantee the compliance of our products with these values (that is, the products do not contain lead or cadmium at or above these levels), not only for the California market but also for all products sold throughout the USA.*

*An independent expert investigation conducted as a condition of this California Proposition 65 settlement concluded, as alluded to above, that cadmium and lead are naturally present in cacao and chocolate in trace levels due to the characteristics of the soil in some regions of the world, and that bean cleaning and other precautions during processing cacao beans reduces lead and cadmium in chocolate products. For many years, we have been working closely with our cacao partners and our teams to minimize lead and cadmium levels.*

#### **- Quality management -**