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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Expands Investigation into Possible Cancer-Causing Agent Potassium Bromate in Food Supply



Courtesy of the Office of the Attorney General

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier issued a civil investigative subpoena to Performance Food Group, Inc., expanding the investigation into potassium bromate in Florida's food supply.

"We are following this additive from the bag of flour to the kitchen that serves Florida families," **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "Performance Food Group is one of the largest buyers in this chain. Floridians have a right to know what was sold, who bought it, and whether anyone was told that these products contain a chemical much of the world has already banned."

"True preventative medicine starts long before a patient walks into a clinic or one of our county health departments—it starts with clean, safe, and transparently labeled food," **said Kristine Zonka, DNP, APRN, Florida Department of Health**. "I'm grateful for Attorney General Uthmeier for holding both manufacturers and major distributors accountable."

“As a surgeon, I cannot un-cause a cancer,” **said Danny Cohen, MD**. “I can only try to cut it out after it has already taken hold. But prevention—keeping proven and probable carcinogens out of our food supply—is the one intervention that works before the diagnosis, before the operating room, before the grief.”

Performance Food Group, through its Performance Foodservice operations, is among the top purchasers of bromated flour identified in the investigation. The subpoena requires the company to produce records from its Miami and Orlando distribution centers showing which food products containing specified bromated flours were sold, who bought those products, who bought the flour itself, and what disclosures were made to purchasers.

Potassium bromate is used to strengthen dough and increase loaf volume. The International Agency for Research on Cancer classifies it as possibly carcinogenic to humans. Animal studies link it to kidney, thyroid, and other tumors, and residues can remain in finished baked goods when it is not fully broken down. The European Union, Canada, China, India, Brazil, and many other countries prohibit its use in food. The United States still allows limited use.

The subpoena seeks records involving Pillsbury Potentate High Gluten Flour, Pillsbury Best Bakers Patent Flour, Gold Medal All Aces Bakery Flour, and Gold Medal Superlative Bakers Flour—each a bleached, bromated, enriched bakery flour—as sold or used through Performance Foodservice Miami and Performance Foodservice Orlando.

The company must produce the materials by November 6, 2026, to the Office of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division in Tampa, or electronically to investigators before that date.

This subpoena does not itself establish a violation of law. It is the next step in determining how bromated flour moved through Florida’s foodservice market and whether buyers were given the information they needed. Safer dough conditioners—including ascorbic acid and modern enzyme systems—are already in widespread commercial use where bromate is banned.

This action continues Attorney General Uthmeier’s investigation of potassium bromate in products sold in Florida and his commitment to transparency in the food supply.

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