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New Report Finds BPA in Popular Thanksgiving Canned Food *Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT calls on manufacturers to replace toxic chemical with a safer alternative*

[HARTFORD]—A new report released today by the Breast Cancer Fund documents the presence of the toxic chemical bisphenol A (BPA) in canned foods used to prepare a typical Thanksgiving dinner.

The report, “BPA in Thanksgiving Canned Food,” tested four cans each of Campbell’s Cream of Mushroom Soup; Campbell’s Turkey Gravy; Carnation Evaporated Milk (by Nestle); Del Monte Fresh Cut Sweet Corn, Cream Style; Green Giant Cut Green Beans (by General Mills); Libby’s Pumpkin (by Nestle); and Ocean Spray Jellied Cranberry Sauce. Single servings of almost half of the products tested had levels of BPA comparable to levels that laboratory studies have linked to adverse health effects.

“This is just another prime example of why we need federal reform,” said **Laura Anderson**, a concerned parent who has been working with the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut (CSHC) to make consumer products safer. “Thanksgiving is a time for gathering with family and friends and more often than not includes a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. When that dinner poses a risk to our health because some of the ingredients came from a can containing BPA – which numerous studies have linked to serious illnesses, it’s time for Congress to address the issue. Anderson added that currently the Safe Chemicals Act of 2011 is before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee this Thursday for a hearing.

Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), who as Attorney General worked with the Coalition to pass bans on BPA in children’s products such as baby bottles, sippy cups and reusable food containers, said, “I commend the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut’s commitment to food safety, especially as we enter the holiday season. As a proud co-sponsor of the Safe Chemicals Act of 2011 in the United States Senate, I will continue to push for swift, comprehensive federal reform to prevent hazardous chemicals in our food and products from harming our children and families

BPA acts as a synthetic hormone and has been linked to breast cancer and a host of other health concerns. BPA is also used to make, among other things, the epoxy-resin linings of metal food cans. The lining forms a barrier between the metal and the food that helps to prevent bacterial contamination. However, the toxic chemical can leach from the resin and make its way into food. What’s meant to be a

protective barrier between the metal and the can's contents actually leaches this toxic chemical into the food we eat. BPA has been linked in laboratory studies to adverse health effects such as breast and prostate cancer, infertility, early puberty in girls, type-2 diabetes, obesity and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

"Connecticut has led the nation in protecting consumers from the health risks linked to BPA exposure," said **Anne Hulick**, Coordinator for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut. "Just last year Connecticut lawmakers passed a bill that requires thermal register receipt paper be BPA-free. Connecticut sees the danger, it's time for the rest of the nation to follow suit. We are very lucky to have strong champions working on this issue not just in the Connecticut Legislature, but now in Congress also."

For this report, the Breast Cancer Fund sent 28 canned food items—four cans of each product tested—to Anresco Laboratories, an independent testing laboratory in San Francisco. The testing revealed tremendous variability among cans of the same product made by the same company, which is consistent with other product testing data.

For instance, BPA levels in Del Monte creamed corn ranged from non-detectable to 221 parts per billion, and levels in Campbell's Turkey Gravy ranged from 5 to 125 ppb. According to scientists at the Breast Cancer Fund, these inconsistencies might be explained by variations in the canning processes across facilities and batches, as well as storage and transportation conditions.

"Consumers have no way of assessing BPA levels just by looking at cans on supermarket shelves," said Gretchen Lee Salter, Policy Manager at the Breast Cancer Fund. "The findings of this report highlight the urgent need to remove BPA from food packaging so that shoppers can be confident that the food they are purchasing is safe for their families—not only on Thanksgiving, but every day."

The tests detected no BPA in any of the four cans of Ocean Spray Cranberry Sauce. The company has stated that while it does use BPA in its cans, independent tests also indicate no leaching of BPA into the food.

As part of the Breast Cancer Fund's Cans Not Cancer campaign, consumers have sent more than 50,000 letters to canned food manufacturers urging them to get BPA out of canned foods and replaced with a safer alternative, and many are beginning to pay attention. A number of companies, including some of the can manufacturers featured in this report such as General Mills and Nestle, have announced that they are working toward alternatives to BPA in canned foods. However, not all of the manufacturers are disclosing the alternative they are using or exploring. It is imperative that manufacturers be transparent about these alternatives and ensure they are safe.

At the public policy level, 11 states have banned BPA from baby bottles and sippy cups and three of those states have also banned it from infant formula and baby food. Hulick added that CSHC is also supporting [pending federal legislation](#) authored by Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., that would ban BPA from all food and beverage containers including canned foods.

"In my experience as a public health nurse caring for those in their homes, I can tell you that the public is mostly unaware of the hidden risk in their canned foods," said Hacad Boros, RN. "For the poor, the elderly, and even for busy families, canned foods are a staple in their diets. It is essential that we evaluate how all food is packaged to protect ourselves from chemicals like BPA that are prevalent in our food and have a significant health impact. The research is in and the evidence is clear. It is time to make

the changes necessary to protect families. Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate family, home and health and not a time to worry about toxic chemical exposure. The time is now for Congress to protect the health of its citizens and ban poisonous additives from food packaging.”

The immediate solution for those preparing Thanksgiving dinner is to seek alternatives to canned foods. Visit www.breastcancerfund.org/thanksgiving for easy recipes for a can-free Thanksgiving meal.

Also included in the BPA in Thanksgiving Food report, are Myths/Facts about BPA in Canned Foods, combating the common industry arguments in favor of BPA.

The full report can be downloaded at www.breastcancerfund.org/thanksgiving.

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