

Media Statement

1 February 2012

Sanitarium Christchurch Factory Extends its Suspension of Weet-Bix Manufacturing Operations

Sanitarium New Zealand management have shared with their Christchurch Manufacturing staff today a decision to indefinitely suspend Weet-Bix manufacturing operations. The decision was made after considering the Final Engineering Report on the manufacturing buildings received late last week.

“After numerous discussions with our engineers, insurers and CERA, it has become clear that as a result of the February 2011 earthquake the tower block has been damaged to an extent that it puts staff safety at risk,” says Pierre van Heerden, General Manager-of Sanitarium.

“A decision has been taken to immediately commence deconstruction of the tower block. It’s not a decision we have taken lightly or without considering all our options,” said van Heerden.

Sanitarium’s suspension of Weet-Bix manufacturing operations means employees at the plant were offered redundancy packages and an employee support program to assist them through the transition ahead.

“At all times, our top priority is the physical safety, and the emotional and financial support for our team affected by this decision,” he said.

New Zealanders will continue to enjoy Weet-Bix with stock being supplied from other Sanitarium production sites. Warehousing, Distribution and Sales teams will continue to operate normally from the Christchurch site.

Sanitarium management and engineers are working as quickly as possible to move the Marmite plant once the tower block is removed. The Company’s intention is to get Marmite production back on track as soon as possible.

“While we are working through these steps for our site we are not yet in a position to make a final decision on the future of the site,” says van Heerden. “We are carefully working through all our options and believe at this stage, the review may take from six to nine months.”

Work commences on the deconstruction of the tower block on February 2.

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for a better life”*