

## Italian officials say cheese is safe

*by UPI*

ROME - Italian officials insisted Thursday that buffalo mozzarella exported from the country is safe. Agriculture Minister Paolo de Castro dramatized his belief by eating a portion of cheese at a news conference. A European Union spokeswoman said dioxin levels found at 20 dairies were not "excessive," although they were above EU standards. "Apparently the contaminated product is available on the local market but has not been sent to third countries," she said. High levels of PCBs have also been found. Both are suspected carcinogens. Japan has ordered shipments of buffalo mozzarella held at airports pending testing.

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