



**International Baby Food Action
Network**

Ongoing Efforts to Address Commercial Formula Milk Contamination

**Global Breastfeeding
Collective**

16th March 2026

Contamination of formula commonplace for decades.

Salmonella and Cronobacter sakazakii contamination prompted WHA Resolution 58.32 and Codex and WHO Guidance on labelling and preparation.

2005

US Company ByHeart backed by tech investors promotes and sells formula online direct to consumers in Canada, Africa, the Arab world, Asia and Latin America.

**FDA investigates ByHeart's facilities in Iowa and Oregon finds serious problems
Raises *Official Action Indicated (OAI)* red flag – its highest tier of concern.**

**2022
2025**

**NOV
2025**

ByHeart announces voluntary recall of formula cans

**11
NOV
2025**

Public health advocates note an increase of infant botulism cases from August 2025 in babies fed ByHeart formula

ByHeart claims its products are made with clean organic milk.....
'filled with ingredients backed by breast milk science in every scoop'...
'rigorous testing going above and beyond what is required'

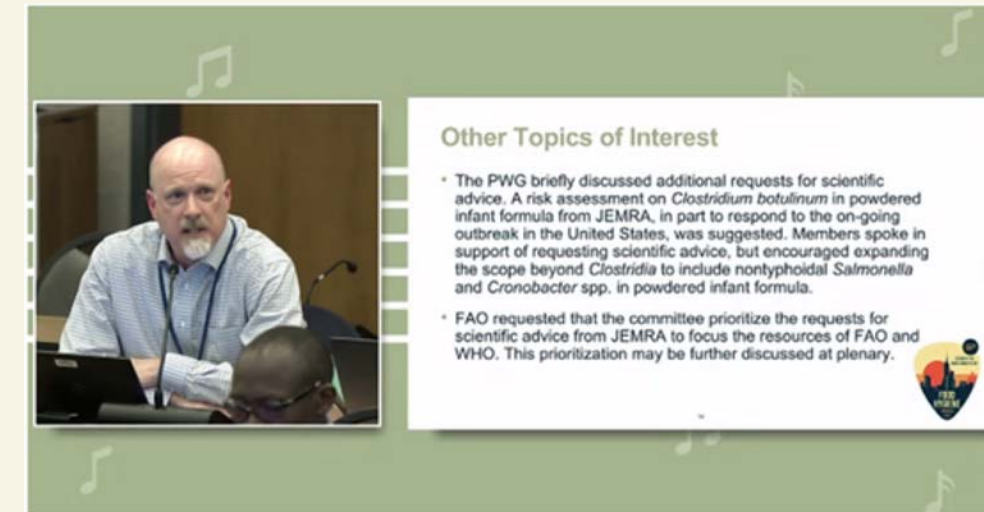
DEC
2025

ByHeart's tech investors



Codex Food Hygiene (CCFH55)

IBFAN & ENCA, supported by several countries, prompt CODEX to request that JEMRA (FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment) review the Code of Hygienic Practice to address “spore-forming pathogens – (C.botulinium and B.cereus) in powdered infant formula.”



Codex in Nashville

15-19
DEC
2025

19
DEC
2025

Codex Food Hygiene
(CCFH55)

**Additional IBFAN
Codex demands**

- 1 Warn that global online marketing and sales have safety risks.
- 2 Highlight WHA recommendations and Codex Code of Ethics for International Trade and Food Aid.
- 3 Require independent verification of food safety systems – trade associations should not be included among the options.
- 4 Ensure **FULL** baby food labelling for emergencies.

**51 infants
hospitalized with
confirmed infant
botulism!**

Nestlé recall in 60+ countries

Nestlé infant, follow-on, preterm and specialised formulas recalled from 60+ countries because of possible cereulide toxin contamination traced to the optional ingredient arachidonic acid (ARA). Crisis spreads to Danone, Lactalis and other major companies

**JAN
2026**

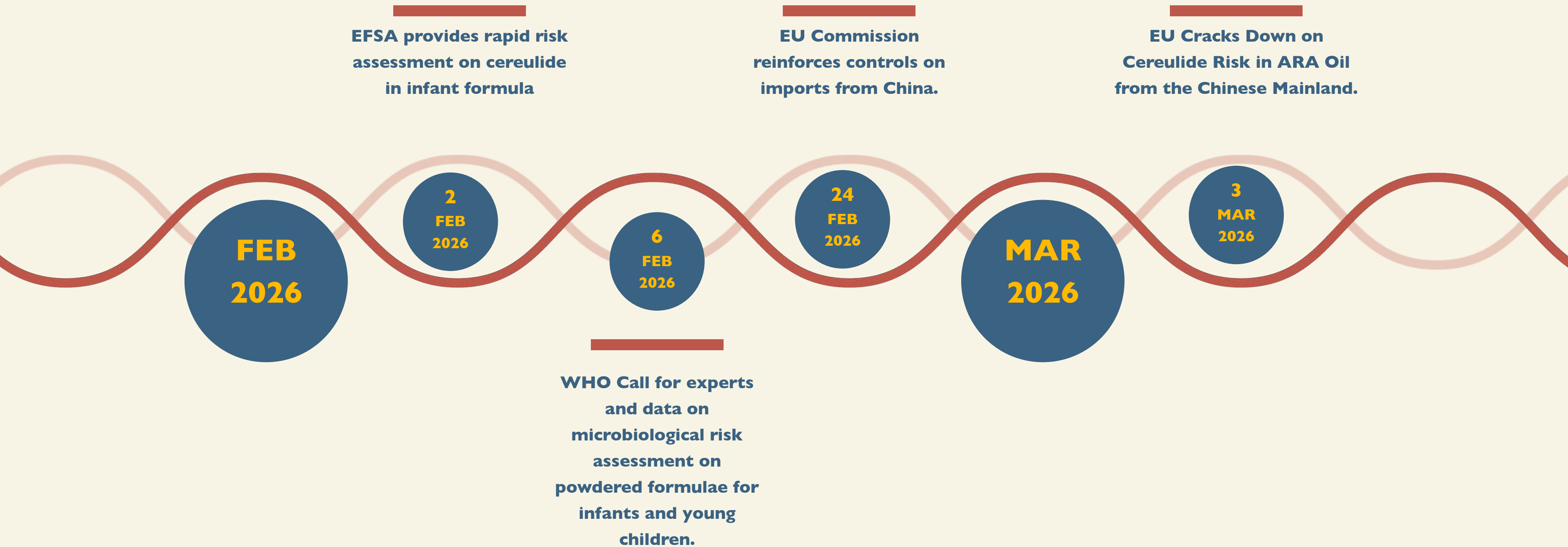
**10
JAN
2026**

Nestlé alerts EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of cereulide toxin contamination in infant formula from the Netherlands in December – but waits until January 6th to initiate the recall, claiming it is “out of an abundance of caution, Nestlé has decided to perform this voluntary product recall in line with our strict product quality and safety protocols.”

Nestlé ignores its responsibility to ensure all ingredients meet Codex microbial standards -passing blame to unnamed external suppliers.

Judicial inquiries into infant deaths, legal challenges about delays, lack of transparency, fraud and manslaughter follow while industry say there are no confirmed links.

Official action



Systemic failures in food systems

Formulas are UPFs – used as the sole food when babies are not breastfed during the most important phase of development.

The safety of optional and novel ingredients is not assured – indeed there is no proof that ARA improves outcomes. Breastmilk is a totally different living biological environment with co-enzymes that help fats to work optimally.

10 reasons to stop this DHA¹claim



Mead Johnson advert claiming that DHA-fortified formulas aid eye development. After investigations and legal actions the eye claims are now rarely used in the USA.

On 6th Dec 2010 the EU Standing Committee on Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFCAH) ² approved the following health claim for use on follow-on formulas ³ and baby foods: *'DHA has a structural and functional role in the retina and DHA intake contributes to the visual development of infants up to 12 months of age.'* A Resolution objecting to this claim was passed at the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the majority of MEPs voted to stop the claim at the full Plenary of the European Parliament on April 6th. ⁴ However this was not an 'absolute majority' of all MEPs - so the Commission can still authorise the claim.

1996 - Martek Bio-sciences Corporation. “Even if Formulaid (DHA/AHA) had no benefit we think that it would be widely incorporated into most formulas as a marketing tool and to allow companies to promote their formula as ‘closest to human milk’.”

2007 - UK Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) 2007 “..If an ingredient is unequivocally beneficial as demonstrated by independent review of scientific data it would be unethical to withhold it for commercial reasons. Rather it should be made a required ingredient of infant formula in order to reduce existing risks associated with artificial feeding.”



**IBFAN WEBINAR on
Food Safety with
Yasmine Motarjemi,
Nestlé Whistleblower**

**21
JAN
2026**

G2H2 POLICY DEBATE
21 JANUARY 2026
11.00-12.30 CET

BABY MILK ACTION
IBFAN UK

G2H2 GENEVA GLOBAL HEALTH HUB

**SERIOUS FOOD SAFETY FAILINGS EXPOSE
GLOBAL HEALTH RISK OF UNREGULATED
ONLINE CROSS BORDER PROMOTION**

**IBFAN WEBINAR
ON FOOD SAFETY**

**with
Yasmine Motarjemi
Nestlé Whistleblower**

**INFANT
FORMULA**

FILLED WITH INGREDIENTS
BACKED BY BREAST MILK SCIENCE
IN EVERY SCOOP

RIGOROUS QUALITY AND SAFETY TESTING
GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND WHAT IS REQUIRED

Read more

**Participation requires
advance registration**

Full details available
on the **website**

WHO 158th Executive Board (EB158)

**IBFAN calls for a WHA resolution to
review, update and expand the WHO and
CODEX guidelines on intrinsic
contamination of powdered formula that
are now 20 years old.**

**FEB
2026**

**2 - 7
FEB
2026**

**50 governments & NGOs highlight
risks of digital marketing, the need
for more protection of breastfeeding.**

**3 MSs - Norway, Burundi & Belgium
specifically mention contamination crisis and
called for food safety surveillance to be
independent, transparent and free from
conflicts of interest.**

Systemic failures in food systems and manufacturing



lack of transparency, no independent regulatory oversight, poor recall systems and crisis communication.

Contamination is especially problematic in the Global South and settings with restricted access to treatments.

Digital marketing risks

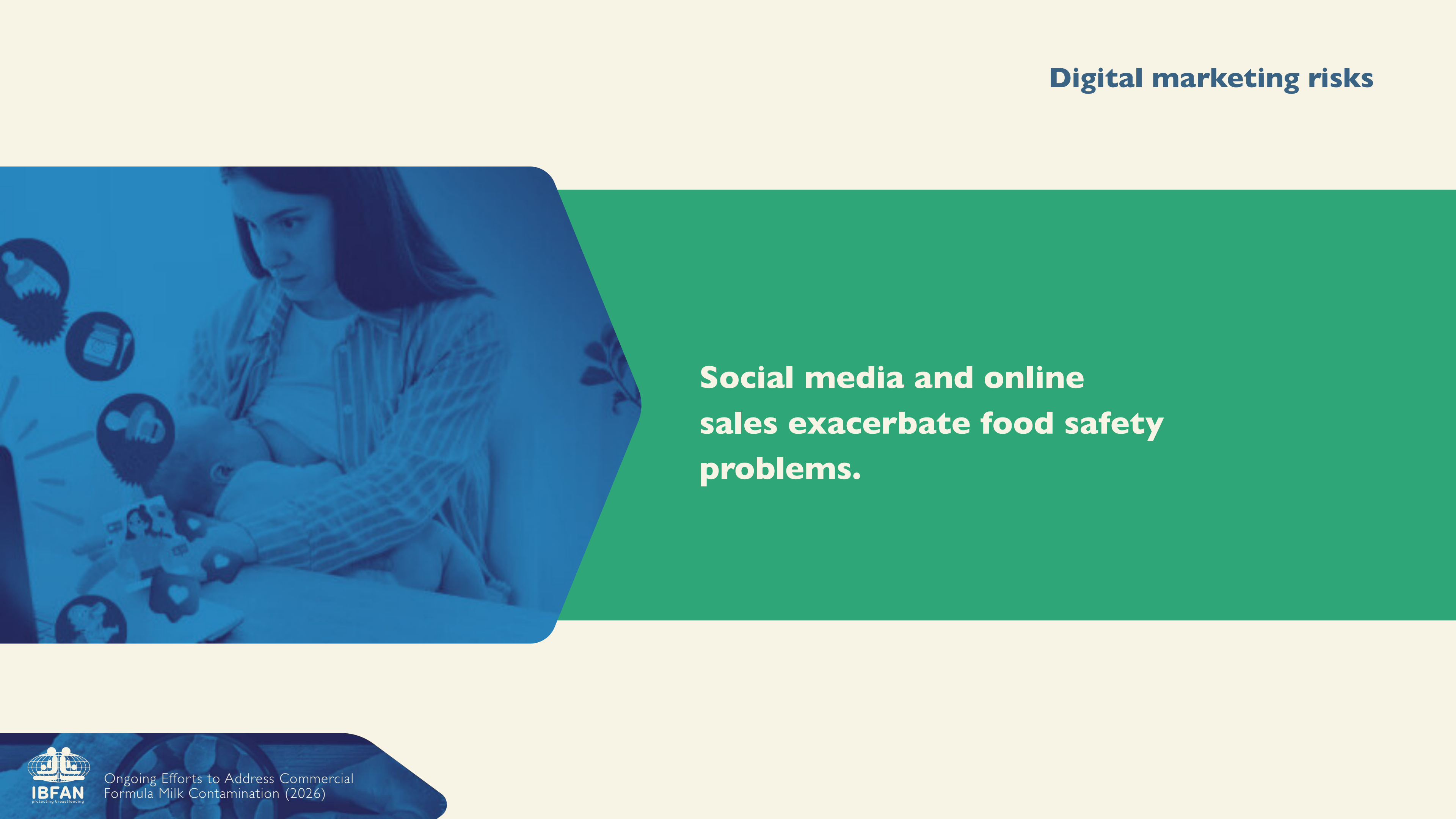
Social media and online sales exacerbate food safety problems.

Ongoing Efforts to Address Commercial
Formula Milk Contamination (2026)

Digital marketing risks

Social media and online sales exacerbate food safety problems.

Ongoing Efforts to Address Commercial
Formula Milk Contamination (2026)



Digital marketing risks

Social media and online sales exacerbate food safety problems.


IBFAN
protecting breastfeeding

Ongoing Efforts to Address Commercial
Formula Milk Contamination (2026)

Collective Advocacy Opportunities

- **2026 MIYCN reporting year** – lets use it to highlight food system failures and disproportionate dependence on formulas– ideally with a Resolution.
- **WHA Side Event** – reach out to Member States.
- **Help survey** national recall procedures and parent stories..
- **Support** calls for legal remedies and support for families.
- **Improve health worker training** in line with BFHI, mandatory maternity protection and leave etc.
- **Monitor** humanitarian aid and environmental impact of disposal.



Whistleblowing: Food Safety and Fraud

The Council of Europe defines a whistleblower as "any person who reports or discloses information on a threat or harm to the public interest in the context of their work-based relationship, whether public or private." The term *whistle* refers to internal reporting within an organisation or enterprise, while the term *blow* refers to reporting to an outside authority or to the public.¹

I heard the term "whistleblowing" for the first time sometime in the early 2000s when I was working as the food safety manager in a multinational food company. I remember that at a weekly department meeting, the director of the department shared an article on the subject and asked rhetorically, "I wonder if we are blowing the whistle often enough?" At that time, I did not know that one day, I would end up as a whistleblower in the company. It is this professional and personal experience that has prompted me to write

*First they
ignore you,
then they laugh
at you,
then they fight you,
then you win.*

—Mikhail Gorbachev

this article. However, this is not about my case, but the bigger issue of whistleblowing and what it means for society.

In recent years, with the revelations of Bradley Manning and lately those of Edward Snowden, whistleblowing has become controversial because it is alleged that national security or interests have been compromised. However, the phenomenon is not new, and there have always been individuals who have gone against widely held beliefs to reveal information of critical importance to society. Although in the early days they were not seen as whistleblowers, they were, like Camus, not

always appreciated or heard. For certain individuals, the term *whistleblower* has a negative connotation (e.g., a snitch or traitor); yet, most whistleblowers have high ethical and moral character and many have suffered great mental, physical and economic hardships to render this service to society.

REPRINTED FROM FOOD SAFETY MAGAZINE, SUMMER 2014, WITH PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHERS.
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Listen to Whistleblowers

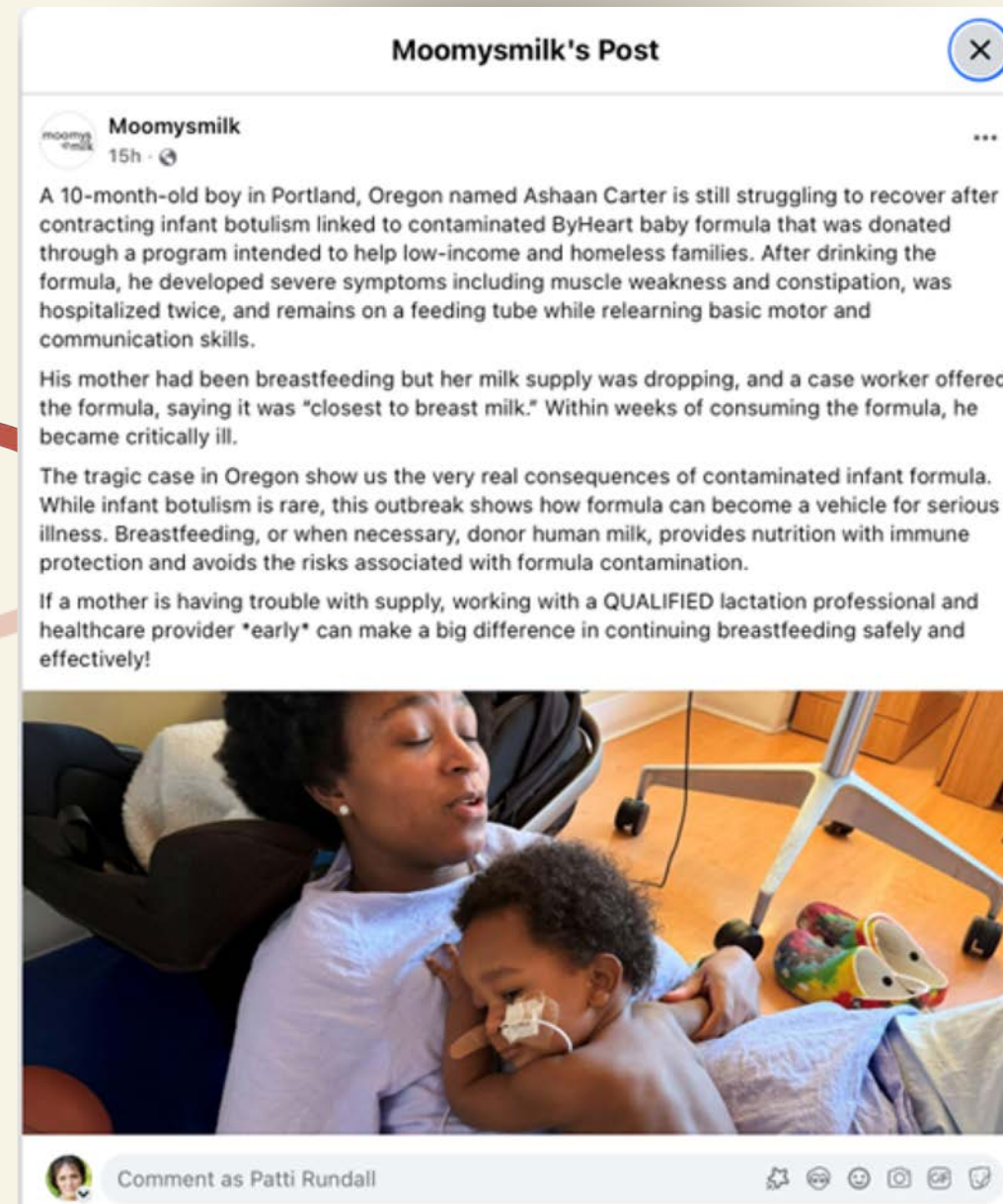


Contaminated products and food aid – remember Chernobyl

19
JAN
2026



**“Oregon baby is still
battling infant
botulism after ByHeart
formula exposure”**

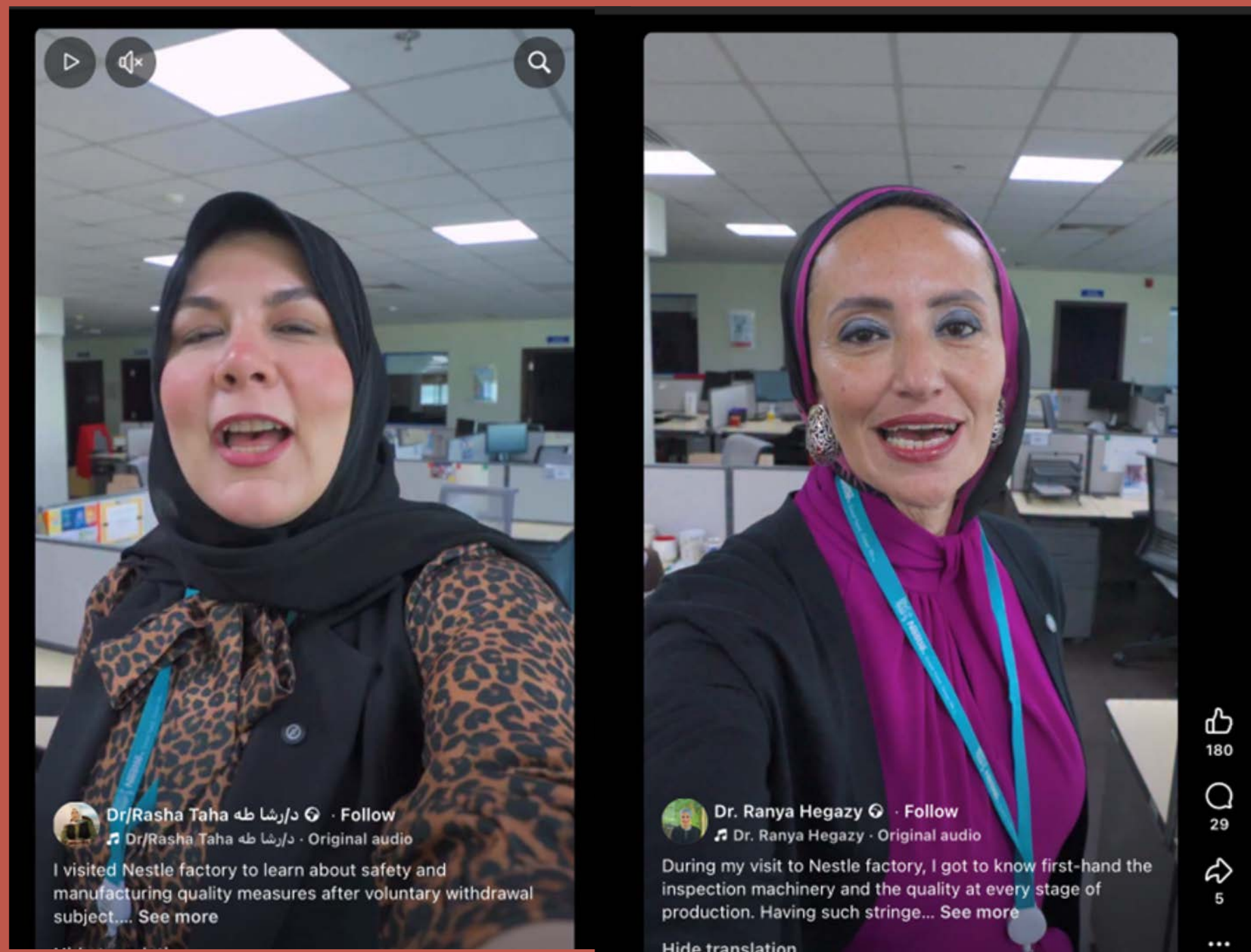


A 10-month-old boy in Portland, Oregon named Ashaan Carter is still struggling to recover after contracting infant botulism linked to contaminated ByHeart baby formula that was donated through a program intended to help low-income and homeless families.

After drinking the formula, he developed severe symptoms including muscle weakness and constipation, was hospitalized twice, and remains on a feeding tube while relearning basic motor and communication skills....

Using paediatricians to reassure

Egypt March 2026



**Are they
doing this in
your
country?**



Ongoing Efforts to Address Global Powdered Infant Formula Contamination Events



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IBFAN

protecting breastfeeding

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