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TOKYO, (Kyodo) — More than 200 people in 32 prefectures have complained of falling sick after consuming some of the food products sold by a Japanese company that is at the center of a scandal over tainted frozen food products, a tally by Kyodo News showed Monday.

The local governments are checking whether pesticide was responsible after Aqlifoods Co., a subsidiary of Maruha Nichiro Holdings Inc., revealed last month that some of its frozen food products were tainted with malathion.

Maruha Nichiro said the same day that it had received around 455,000 phone calls from consumers since Dec. 29 -- when Aqlifoods announced a recall of the tainted products made at its factory in Gunma Prefecture -- through Sunday.

The food maker had recovered around 1.11 million products by Saturday, only about 17 percent of those covered under its voluntarily recall.

Prompted by reports from customers about the unusual odor of some products, Aqlifoods detected malathion, which is used as pesticide, in the products.

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