

CFS finds ethylene oxide in samples of prepackaged seasoning

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 9) that samples of several kinds of prepackaged seasoning were found to contain a pesticide, ethylene oxide. Members of the public should not consume the affected products. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected products immediately if they possess any of them.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Chili Powder
Brand: SPICE ISLANDS
Manufactured in: United States
Net weight: 2.4oz (68 grams)
Best-before date: April 19, 2027
Distributor: SIMS Trading Co. Ltd.
Hotline: 2262 1587

Product name: Ground Nutmeg
Brand: BADIA
Packed in: United States
Net weight: 2oz (56.7 grams)
Best-before date: December 2024
Importer: Baking Warehouse.com
Hotline: 2172 6916

Product name: BASIL LEAVES
Brand: BADIA
Packed in: United States
Net weight: 4oz (113.4 grams)
Best-before date: December 2026
Distributor: Prime Fortune (Asia) Limited
Hotline: 2366 3330

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the above-mentioned samples from a supermarket in Causeway Bay and two online shops respectively for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test results showed that the samples contained a pesticide, ethylene oxide. The CFS has informed the vendors concerned of the irregularities and instructed them to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected products. According to the CFS's instructions, the distributor(s)/importer(s) concerned have initiated recalls on the affected products. Members of the public may call the respective hotlines above during office hours for enquiries about the recalls of the products concerned."

The spokesman continued, "The International Agency for Research on Cancer has classified ethylene oxide as a Group 1 carcinogen. According to

the Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap. 132CM), a food for human consumption containing pesticide residue may only be sold if consumption of the food is not dangerous or prejudicial to health. An offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for six months upon conviction."

The spokesman urged the public not to consume the affected products if they have bought any. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected products concerned immediately if they possess any of them.

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the incidents and take appropriate action. Investigations are ongoing.