

CFS finds excessive Bacillus cereus in sample of bottled preserved bean curd

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 4) announced that a sample of bottled preserved bean curd was found to contain an excessive amount of *Bacillus cereus*. Members of the public should not consume the affected batch of the product. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected batch of the product immediately if they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: (Not available in English)

Place of origin: Hong Kong

Net weight: 255 grams

Best-before date: April 16, 2025

Manufacturer: LIU MA KEE LIMITED

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from a retail outlet in Sai Ying Pun for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained *Bacillus cereus* at a level of 130 000 per gram. According to the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains *Bacillus cereus* at a level of more than 100 000 per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The spokesman said that the CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and has instructed the vendor to stop sales and to remove from shelves the affected batch of the product. The manufacturer concerned has initiated a recall of the affected batch of the product according to the CFS's instructions. Members of the public may call the manufacturer's hotline at 2730 2968 during office hours for enquiries about the product recall. The CFS has also inspected the food factory concerned, provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the food factory, and requested it to review and improve the food production process and carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection. In addition, the sample did not indicate the best-before date according to the requirements stipulated in the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W). Prosecution will be instituted against the persons concerned should there be sufficient evidence.

"*Bacillus cereus* is commonly found in the environment. Unhygienic conditions in food processing and storage may give rise to its growth. Consuming food contaminated with excessive *Bacillus cereus* or its heat-stable toxins may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting and diarrhoea," the spokesman said.

The CFS will alert the trade to the incident, and will continue to follow up and take appropriate action. The investigation is ongoing.