

CFS finds excessive Staphylococcus aureus in two food samples

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (November 22) announced that a kimbap sample and a fried egg sample were found to contain excessive amounts of Staphylococcus aureus. The CFS is following up on the case.

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned samples for testing from a food premises in Lok Fu. The test results showed that the two samples contained Staphylococcus aureus at levels of 51 000 and 21 000 per gram respectively. According to the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains Staphylococcus aureus at a level of more than 10 000 per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory," a CFS spokesman said.

The CFS has informed the food premises concerned of the irregularities. The food premises concerned have already stopped operations and discarded the affected products according to the CFS's advice. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the food premises concerned, and requested them to review and improve the food production process and carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

According to section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), all food available for sale in Hong Kong, imported or locally produced, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

"Staphylococcus aureus can produce enterotoxins that cause food poisoning. Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain, often accompanied by diarrhoea," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health.