

CFS follows up on incident of imported prepackaged cereal products which may contain allergens (gluten and wheat)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (February 19) said that following further investigation on the incident of American prepackaged cereal products containing allergens, gluten and wheat, undeclared on the products' food labels, it was found that the distributor/importer concerned had imported and sold a total of three batches of the two kinds of affected products (two of the batches being recalled by a retailer already announced earlier). The CFS urged consumers who are allergic to gluten or wheat not to consume the products concerned and the trade should stop using or selling the affected products immediately if they possess them.

Product details are as follows:

(1) Product name: Choco Chimps
Brand: Nature's Path EnviroKidz
Place of origin: USA
Distributor/Importer : Rainbow Asset Ltd
Net weight: 10 ounces (284 grams) per box
Best-before date: August 27, 2019

(2) Product name: Gorilla Munch
Brand: Nature's Path EnviroKidz
Place of origin: USA
Distributor/Importer : Rainbow Asset Ltd
Net weight: 10 ounces (284 grams) per box
Best-before dates: August 24 (additional batch) and September 21, 2019

"The CFS announced earlier that two batches of prepackaged cereal products were to be recalled as they might contain allergens, gluten and wheat, but they were not declared on the products' food labels. The CFS' follow-up investigation found that the distributor concerned, which was also the importer, had imported the abovementioned batches of affected products and were all sold to different vendors (including supermarkets, retail outlets and organisations). The CFS has instructed the distributor/importer to initiate a recall of the abovementioned products. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the distributor's/importer's hotline at 2898 3252 during office hours or via email at: enquiry@rainbowhk.com.hk," a spokesman for the CFS said.

"Gluten and wheat are known food allergens. Those who are allergic to gluten or wheat may develop symptoms like vomiting, diarrhoea, asthma and rash upon consumption. In severe cases anaphylactic shock may even develop," the spokesman said further.

The spokesman advised consumers who are allergic to gluten or wheat not to eat the products, and to seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after taking the food. The trade should also stop using or selling the above batches of the affected products immediately should they possess them.

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong should list out the food ingredients in its list of ingredients. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

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