

CFS takes samples of imported salmon for testing

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (June 15) said that in view of recent media reports that the novel coronavirus was detected on chopping boards used for cutting salmon during a COVID-19 case investigation in Beijing, the CFS has taken immediate follow-up action to understand the incident. For the sake of prudence, the CFS has immediately taken salmon samples from import and wholesale levels from different places for testing as a precautionary measure. The Centre also reminded members of the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times, and cook food thoroughly to protect food safety.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "According to current scientific information, there is no evidence indicating that human can be infected by the novel coronavirus via food (including aquatic products). In addition, the World Health Organization and global food safety assessment authorities consider that it is unlikely that the novel coronavirus can be transmitted to human via food. Nevertheless, given that raw or undercooked aquatic products are high-risk, if they are uncooked or underheated, consumption of food contaminated with bacteria or viruses may cause food poisoning. For the sake of prudence, the CFS has taken samples of imported salmon for testing as a precautionary measure."

The spokesman also reminded food handlers that they should always keep their hands clean, and frequently clean and disinfect surfaces, especially food contact surfaces in food premises (such as tableware, kitchenware, insulated bags for takeaways, conveyor belts at cashier desks) and high-touch points (such as door handlers, handles of the shopping trolleys and water taps) to ensure environmental hygiene, while social distancing measures should also be adopted. Food handlers should cease engaging in any food handling work and seek medical advice promptly when suffering or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease or symptoms of illness.