

CFS urges public not to consume a kind of bottled fruit juice drink contaminated with patulin

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (May 22) announced that a sample of a bottled fruit juice drink produced in Hong Kong was found to be contaminated with a mycotoxin, patulin, at a level exceeding the action level adopted by the CFS. Follow-up is in progress.

"Following up on a food complaint, the CFS collected the above-mentioned sample at a retail outlet in Mong Kok for testing. The test result showed that the sample contained patulin at a level of 63 parts per billion (ppb), exceeding the action level of 50 ppb adopted by the CFS. The level is the same as the standard of the Codex Alimentarius Commission on patulin in apples or apple juice," a CFS spokesman said.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: DR. DETOX – ORIGINAL
Brand: bless
Place of origin: Hong Kong
Distributor: Bless International Group Limited
Volume: 270 millilitres
Use-by date: July 5, 2020

The CFS has informed the manufacturer/distributor concerned of the irregularity, and the manufacturer/distributor has stopped sale and removed from shelves all batches of the affected product and initiated a recall of the affected batch of the product according to the CFS' instruction. Members of the public may call the company's hotline at 2412 1008 for enquiries about the recall during office hours. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

"Patulin mostly occurs in rotten apple and its products. Animal studies showed that ingesting high doses of patulin can induce liver, spleen and kidney damage, as well as toxicity to the immune system. For humans, nausea, gastrointestinal disturbances and vomiting have been reported," the spokesman said.

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

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health. Investigation is ongoing.