

CFS urges public not to consume a kind of goat cheese imported from France suspected to be contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (August 29) urged the public not to consume a kind of goat cheese imported from France due to possible contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*, a pathogen. The trade should stop using or selling the affected batches of the product immediately if they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: PALET DU BERRY

Brand: XAVIER

Place of origin: France

Pack size: 150 grams

Lot number: 3288624, 3319239, 3319293

Best-before date: August 10, 2023; August 25, 2023 and August 31, 2023

Importer: GOURMET EN PROVENCE LIMITED

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed of the European Commission that the above-mentioned batches of product might have been contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* and are being recalled. Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately contacted the concerned local importer for follow-up. A preliminary investigation found that the above-mentioned importer had imported into Hong Kong the affected batches of the product concerned," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The importer concerned has stopped sales, has removed the affected product from shelves and has initiated a recall according to the CFS's instructions. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the importer's hotline at 3113 1314 during office hours.

"*Listeria monocytogenes* can be easily destroyed by cooking but can survive and multiply at refrigerator temperature. Most healthy individuals do not develop symptoms or only have mild symptoms like fever, muscle pain, headache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea when infected. However, severe complications such as septicaemia, meningitis or even death may occur in newborns, the elderly and those with a weaker immune system. Although infected pregnant women may just experience mild symptoms generally, the infection of *Listeria monocytogenes* may cause miscarriage, infant death, preterm birth, or severe infection in newborns," the spokesman said.

"In order to reduce the risk of listeriosis, susceptible populations such as pregnant women should consume freshly prepared hot food where possible, reheat chilled food until it is hot all the way through, and avoid

high-risk foods, including ready-to-eat food such as cold cuts, cold smoked seafood, soft cheeses, salads, etc, or cook them thoroughly before consumption, even if they are presented as part of a dish."

The spokesman urged consumers not to consume the affected product if they have bought any. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately if they possess it.

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