

# CFS urges public not to consume a kind of imported carrots with possible Shiga toxin-producing E. coli 0121 contamination

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (November 20) urged the public not to consume a kind of prepackaged carrots imported from the United States (US) due to possible contamination with Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) 0121. The trade should stop using or selling the affected product immediately if they possess any of it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Organic Whole Carrots

Manufacturer: Grimmway Farms

Brand: Bunny Luv

Place of origin: US

Net weight: Two pounds per pack

Importer: PARKnSHOP (HK) Limited

Available for sale: Since August 23, 2024 from PARKnSHOP, Taste, Fusion and Great supermarkets

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS noted a notification from the Food and Drug Administration of the US that the above-mentioned product is being recalled in the US due to possible contamination with STEC 0121. The CFS immediately contacted local importers for follow-up. A preliminary investigation found that the above-mentioned importer had imported into Hong Kong the affected product concerned."

As a precautionary measure, the importer concerned has stopped selling and removed from shelves the affected product upon the CFS's instructions and has initiated a recall. Members of the public may call the importer concerned at 2606 8658 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

Some strains of E. coli, e.g. E. coli 0121, can cause diseases through the production of a toxin called Shiga toxin. These strains are called STEC. STEC infection is transmitted by faecal-oral route through contaminated food and water, or direct contact with STEC carrying animals. Moreover, due to poor personal hygiene, person-to-person transmission of this pathogen is possible through oral-faecal route. Symptoms of STEC infection include abdominal pain and watery diarrhoea that may in some cases progress to bloody diarrhoea. Fever and vomiting may also occur. Intestinal bleeding and serious complications such as hemolytic uraemic syndrome may also develop in some people. E. coli, including STEC, cannot survive under high temperature and can be killed by thorough cooking.

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