

CFS urges public not to consume a kind of imported prepackaged frozen broccoli suspected to be contaminated with toxic plant seeds

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 28) urged the public not to consume a kind of prepackaged frozen broccoli imported from New Zealand due to possible contamination with seeds of *Xanthium* spp, a toxic plant. The trade should stop using or selling the product concerned immediately if they possess it.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: Organic Broccoli Florets

Brand: OOB Food LP

Place of origin: New Zealand

Importer: The Produce Company Hong Kong Limited

Net weight: 370 grams per pack

Best-before date: September 3, 2022, and September 23, 2022

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS received a notification from the New Zealand concerned authorities through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) that the abovementioned product might have been contaminated with seeds of *Xanthium* spp, a toxic plant, and is being recalled. According to the information provided by INFOSAN, the affected product has been imported into Hong Kong. Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately contacted the local importer concerned for follow-up."

A preliminary investigation found that the importer, The Produce Company Hong Kong Limited, had imported some of the affected product into Hong Kong. For the sake of prudence, the CFS has instructed the importer to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of product and initiate a recall. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the importer's hotline at 2587 1187 during office hours.

"Seeds of *Xanthium* spp contain toxic substances which can induce liver and kidney damage," the spokesman said.

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, continue to follow up and take appropriate action. An investigation is ongoing.