

CFS urges public not to consume batch of prepackaged Spanish chorizo suspected to be contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (November 25) urged the public not to consume a batch of prepackaged chorizo imported from Spain due to possible contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*, a pathogen. The trade should stop using or selling the batch of the product concerned immediately if they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Chorizo Picante
Brand: la alegria
Place of origin: Spain
Net weight: 200 grams per pack
Lot No.: 37, 38 and 39
Best-before date: April 30, 2020

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of the European Commission that the above-mentioned batch of the product might have been contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* and was being recalled. According to the information provided by the RASFF, a local importer, Gourmet Cuisine Hong Kong Limited, had imported some of the affected batch of the product into Hong Kong," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow-up. Preliminary investigation found that the importer had imported 450 packs of the affected batch of the product, of which 26 packs had been sold while the others were disposed of. The importer has initiated a recall according to the CFS' instructions. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the importer's hotline at 2439 1977 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.

The spokesman urged consumers not to consume the affected batch of the 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. Investigation is ongoing.