

CFS urges public not to consume kind of baby snack imported from UK suspected to be contaminated with aflatoxin

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (September 4) urged the public not to consume a kind of baby snack imported from the United Kingdom due to possible contamination with aflatoxin. The trade should stop using or selling the affected batch of the product immediately if they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Organic Blueberry Puffs (Little Bellies Organic Blueberry Puffs)
Brand: Baby Bellies
Place of origin: United Kingdom
Net Weight: 12 grams
Best-before date: April 4, 2024
Distributor: Woolies Limited

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from an online vendor for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that it contained aflatoxin B1 at a level of 0.14 micrograms per kilogram," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Under the Harmful Substances in Food Regulation (Cap 132AF), the maximum concentration for aflatoxin B1 in any other food intended to be consumed principally by persons under the age of 36 months other than infant formula and follow-up formula manufactured from milk protein is 0.1 micrograms per kilogram.

The CFS has informed the online vendor and distributor concerned of the unsatisfactory test result. The concerned vendor has stopped sales and removed the affected batch of product from shelves. The concerned distributor has initiated a recall according to the CFS's instructions. Members of the public may call its hotline at 2335 0511 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

The World Health Organization (WHO)'s International Agency for Research on Cancer classified naturally occurring aflatoxins as carcinogenic to humans, and the Joint Food and Agriculture Organization/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives advised that intake of aflatoxins should be reduced to levels as low as reasonably possible although no health-based guidance value has been set. Aflatoxins can lead to liver cancer after long-term ingestion, and the risk for hepatitis B carriers is relatively high.

The spokesman urged members of the public who had bought the affected product to stop consuming it. To avoid excessive intake of mycotoxins, people should maintain a balanced and varied diet to minimise the risk from a small range of food items, and to avoid consuming food that looks mouldy or damaged.

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