

CFS urges public not to consume two kinds of prepackaged cheese spread that may be contaminated with Clostridium botulinum

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (June 19) urged the public not to consume two kinds of prepackaged cheese spread imported from the United Kingdom (UK) due to possible contamination with Clostridium botulinum. The trade should also stop using or selling the products concerned immediately if they possess them.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Original Cheese Spread

Brand: Primula

Place of origin: UK

Importer: CitySuper

Packing size: 150 grams per tube

Best-before dates: December 29, 2020; January 7, 2021; January 12, 2021; and January 14, 2021

Product name: Cheese Spread with Chives

Brand: Primula

Place of origin: UK

Importer: CitySuper

Packing size: 150g per tube

Best-before dates: December 29, 2020; January 5, 2021; January 12, 2021; and January 19, 2021

A CFS spokesman said, "The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, noted notices issued by the UK Food Standards Agency that the manufacturer of the products is recalling the above-mentioned batches of the products which may be contaminated with Clostridium botulinum due to a production fault."

Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately followed up with major local importers and retailers. Preliminary investigation found that the above-mentioned importer had imported the above batches of the products which were sold in its retail outlets. Upon notification by the UK manufacturer earlier, the importer concerned had already stopped sale, removed from shelves the affected products and initiated a recall. Members of the public may call the importer's hotline at 2736 3866 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

"Foodborne botulism is caused by ingestion of food containing very potent neurotoxin produced by Clostridium botulinum. Symptoms of intoxication include marked fatigue, weakness and vertigo, often followed by blurred

vision and difficulty in speaking and swallowing. The toxin may paralyse the breathing muscles and cause death. Onset of symptoms is usually around 18 to 36 hours after the ingestion of the toxin, but may range from four hours to eight days," the spokesman said.

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

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