

Crab samples detected with excessive cadmium

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 30) announced that a prepackaged frozen brown crab sample and two live brown crab samples were detected with cadmium, a metallic contaminant, exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the incidents.

Details of the prepackaged brown crab sample are as follows:

Product name: Cooked Brown Crab
Product brand: Shell Fish Ireland
Place of origin: Ireland
Weight: 400 – 600 grams
Batch: 191430235
Best-before date: May 2021

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the abovementioned prepackaged brown crab sample and a live brown crab sample from two online shops respectively, and a live brown crab sample at import level for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test results showed that the prepackaged brown crab sample contained cadmium at a level of 2.74 parts per million (ppm), while levels of cadmium of the two live brown crab samples were 7.96ppm and 2.99ppm respectively, exceeding the legal limit of 2ppm.

"The CFS has informed the vendors concerned of the irregularities and the vendors have stopped selling and removed from shelves the affected batches of the products according to the CFS' instructions. The CFS is tracing the sources of the products in question," the spokesman added.

According to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations (Cap 132V), no one shall sell food with metallic contamination above the legal limits. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The spokesman said that the edible portion of crabs' cephalothorax (mainly consisting of internal organs such as crab roes and hepatopancreas) are generally tainted with higher levels of cadmium and other contaminants. People who consume more crabs should avoid consuming crabs' cephalothorax. The trade is also advised to ensure that all foods sold in Hong Kong comply with the legal requirements.

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the incidents and take appropriate action. An investigation is ongoing.