

Excessive cadmium found in prepackaged spinach sample

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 25) announced that a prepackaged spinach sample was detected with cadmium, a metallic contaminant, exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the incident.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: Baby Spinach
Product brand: Earthbound Farm
Place of origin: USA
Net weight: 5 ounces/142 grams per pack
Use-by date: October 27, 2018

"Subsequent to announcing earlier that a spinach sample taken from a supermarket in Ma On Shan was detected with excessive cadmium, the CFS took a spinach sample of the same kind but of a different batch from the same supermarket for testing during follow-up investigation. A similar irregularity was detected, with the test result showing that the sample contained cadmium at a level of 0.14 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 0.1 ppm," a CFS spokesman said.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop sale and remove from shelves all batches of the affected product. The CFS is tracing the source of the affected product. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted," the spokesman added.

According to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations (Cap 132V), any person who sells food with metallic contamination above the legal limits is liable upon conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

"Based on the level of cadmium detected in the sample, adverse health effects will not be caused under usual consumption," the spokesman said.

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