

Excessive preservatives found in Shanghai noodles sample

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (July 15) that a sample of loose-packed Shanghai noodles was found to contain a preservative, benzoic acid, at a level exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "Subsequent to announcing earlier that a sample of Shanghai noodles taken from a shop in Tin Shui Wai was found to contain excessive benzoic acid, the CFS took a sample from another batch of Shanghai noodles from the same shop for testing during a follow-up investigation. A similar irregularity was detected, with the test result showing that the sample contained benzoic acid at a level of 2 100 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 1 000 ppm."

The CFS had informed the vendor concerned about the irregularity and the vendor has already stopped selling the food item in question, according to the CFS' instructions. The CFS is tracing the source of the affected product. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

Benzoic acid is a preservative of low toxicity. Based on the level detected in the sample, adverse health effects would not be caused from normal consumption.

The spokesman reminded the food trade that the use of preservatives in food must comply with the Preservatives in Food Regulation (Cap 132BD). Offenders are liable for a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action.