

Imported goat cheese sample suspected to be contaminated with Listeria monocytogenes

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (August 27) that a sample of goat cheese imported from France was detected with possible contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes*, a pathogen. The concerned batch of the product has not entered the market. The CFS is following up on the incident.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Ste Maure Touraine AOP Blister
Brand: Fromagerie Pierre Jacquin & Fils
Place of origin: France
Importer: Noja Fine Trade Limited
Pack size: 250 gram
Best before date : August 19, 2024
Lot number: J41920018

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed of the European Commission that the above-mentioned batch of product might have been contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* and is being recalled. Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately contacted the local importer for follow-up. The CFS has informed the importer concerned of the irregularity. Investigation revealed that the affected batch of product is still stored in the importer's warehouse and has not entered the local market," a spokesman for the CFS said.

"*Listeria monocytogenes* can be easily destroyed by cooking but can survive and multiply at refrigerator temperature. Most healthy individuals do not develop symptoms or only have mild symptoms like fever, muscle pain, headache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea when infected. However, severe complications such as septicaemia, meningitis or even death may occur in newborns, the elderly and those with a weaker immune system. Although infected pregnant women may just experience mild symptoms generally, the infection of *Listeria monocytogenes* may cause miscarriage, infant death, preterm birth, or severe infection in newborns," the spokesman said.

"In order to reduce the risk of listeriosis, susceptible populations such as pregnant women should consume freshly prepared hot food where possible, reheat chilled food until it is hot all the way through, and avoid high-risk foods, including ready-to-eat food such as cold cuts, cold smoked seafood, soft cheeses, salads, etc, or cook them thoroughly before consumption, even if they are presented as part of a dish."

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