

Imported prepackaged lemon juice concentrate suspected to contain undeclared preservative

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (January 4) announced that a batch of prepackaged lemon juice concentrate produced in Italy was suspected to contain a preservative, sulphur dioxide, but it was not declared on the product's food label. The CFS advised consumers who are allergic to sulphur dioxide to refrain from consuming the affected batch of the product. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Würzmittel mit Zitronensaft (lemon juice concentrate)
Product brand: Piacelli Citrilemon
Place of origin: Italy
Packing: 200 millilitres per pack
Best-before-date: July 14, 2020

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of the European Commission that the above-mentioned product was suspected to contain sulphur dioxide but undeclared on the food label. According to information provided by the RASFF, a local importer, Coils Electronic Co. Ltd. had imported the affected product into Hong Kong," the spokesman said.

The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow up. Preliminary investigation found that importer had imported the affected batch of product which were on sale in its chain stores. The CFS has instructed the importer to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of product and initiate a recall. Members of the public may call the importer's hotline at 3960 9349 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

Sulphur dioxide is a water soluble preservative of low toxicity. However, susceptible individuals who are allergic to this preservative may experience breathing difficulties, headache and nausea.

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