

Kind of French raw milk cheese suspected to be contaminated with Shiga toxin-producing E. coli

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (March 6) announced that a kind of raw milk cheese imported from France might have been contaminated with Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) and is under recall in France.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: VALENCAY et PETIT VALENCAY (raw milk cheese)

Product brand: HARDY

Place of origin: France

Manufacturer: HARDY AFFINEUR

Importer: Classic Fine Foods (Hong Kong) Ltd

Best-before dates: March 6 to 20, 2019

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of the European Commission that the above-mentioned product might have been contaminated with STEC and is being recalled. According to the information provided by the RASFF, a local importer, Classic Fine Foods (Hong Kong) Ltd, had imported some of the affected product into Hong Kong," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow-up. Preliminary investigation found that the importer had imported a small quantity of the affected product and all had been distributed to two food premises which had no stock left.

"People will contract STEC-causing gastro-intestinal disease through consumption of contaminated water or undercooked and contaminated foods. Intestinal bleeding and serious complications such as hemolytic uraemic syndrome may also develop in some people. Moreover, due to poor personal hygiene, person-to-person transmission of this pathogen is possible through the oral-faecal route. E. coli cannot survive under high temperature and can be killed by thorough cooking," the spokesman said.

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