

Kinds of paste from Singapore may contain allergen (fish)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (December 8) said that several kinds of paste imported from Singapore may contain an allergen, fish, but it was not declared on the products' food labels. A CFS spokesman said consumers who are allergic to fish are advised not to consume the products concerned. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected products immediately should they possess them.

Details of the products are as follows:

Product name: Sambal Belachan Chilli Paste

Brand: Kwong Cheong Thye

Place of origin: Singapore

Importer: Tropical Trading Company

Net weight: 230 grams and 1 kilogram

Best-before dates: November 27, 2021 (for 230g), and July 9, 2022 (for 1kg)

Product name: Laksa Paste

Brand: Kwong Cheong Thye

Place of origin: Singapore

Importer: Tropical Trading Company

Net weight: 1kg

Best-before date: May 29, 2022

Product name: Crispy Chilli

Brand: Kwong Cheong Thye

Place of origin: Singapore

Importer: Tropical Trading Company

Net weight: 230g

Best-before date: November 22, 2021

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, has earlier noted a notice issued by the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) that some kinds of paste imported from Singapore are being recalled as the products may contain fish but it is not declared on the products' food labels. The importer concerned has initiated a recall earlier according to the CFS' instructions. Upon follow-up investigation, the CFS learned from the SFA that some other batches of the same kinds of paste with the same problem have been exported to Hong Kong. The CFS immediately contacted the relevant local importer for follow-up."

Investigation found that an importer, Tropical Trading Company, had imported some of the affected products into Hong Kong. The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow-up. The importer has initiated a recall according to the CFS' instructions. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the hotline at 2366 8606 during office hours.

The spokesman added, "Fish is a known food allergen. Those who are allergic to it may develop symptoms like shortness of breath, skin itchiness and rash upon consumption. In severe cases anaphylactic shock may even develop."

The spokesman advised consumers who are allergic to fish to stop consuming the products concerned. People should seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after consuming them.

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong should list out the food ingredients in its list of ingredients. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

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