

Prepackaged candy sample detected with non-permitted colouring matter Acid Red 52 and in breach of food labelling regulation

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 20) announced that a prepackaged candy sample was detected with Acid Red 52, a colouring matter which is not permitted in food. In addition, the prepackaged candy was not marked and labelled in the manner prescribed under the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W). The CFS is following up on the case.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: (Not available in English)
Brand: Maruta
Place of origin: Japan
Importer: (Not available in English)
Net weight: 120 grams per pack
Best-before date: July 2021

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from an online shop for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that Acid Red 52 was detected in the sample."

The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of the product. The importer concerned has initiated a recall according to the CFS' instructions. Members of the public may call the importer's hotline at 2556 9777 during office hours for enquiries about the recall. The CFS is also tracing the source of the affected product.

The spokesman said, "Under the Colouring Matter in Food Regulations (Cap 132H), Acid Red 52 is not permitted in food. Furthermore, the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong should be marked and labelled in the manner prescribed in the relevant Schedules. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment."

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