

Prepackaged chocolate chunks may contain allergen (milk)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (February 27) noted that a kind of prepackaged chocolate chunks manufactured in the United Kingdom might contain milk, an allergen, but it was not declared on the product's food label. Consumers who are allergic to milk are advised not to eat the affected product, irrespective of the batch. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately should they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Dark Chocolate Chunks
Brand: Waitrose Cooks' Ingredients
Place of origin: UK
Importer: PARKnSHOP (HK) Limited
Packing: 100 grams per box
Best-before dates: All dates

"The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, noted a notice issued by the Food Standards Agency of the UK that the above-mentioned product is under recall because it may contain milk but the ingredient is undeclared on the food label," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately followed up with major local importers and retailers. Preliminary investigation found that the above-mentioned importer had imported the above affected product which had been sold in its chain stores. The importer has already stopped sale and removed from shelves the affected product and initiated a recall. Members of the public may call its hotline at 2606 8658 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

The spokesman advised consumers who are allergic to milk to stop consuming the product concerned. They should seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after consuming it.

"People who are allergic to milk may have immunologic response like vomiting, diarrhoea and rash upon consumption of food containing this allergen. In severe cases, anaphylactic shock may even develop. As for other members of the public, generally speaking, they would not be subject to such reactions when the food in question is consumed," he said.

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, continue to follow up on the incident and

take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.