

Prepackaged rice product may contain gluten

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (February 21) said that a sample of prepackaged rice product was detected with gluten, but it was not declared on the product's food label. A CFS spokesman said consumers who are intolerant to gluten are advised not to consume the batch of product concerned. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected batch of product immediately should they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Rice Vermicelli
Brand: Sun Phoenix
Place of origin: China
Distributor: Sun Yik Food Limited
Net weight: 400 grams per pack
Best before date: May 2, 2023

The spokesman said, "When following up on a related incident, the CFS collected the abovementioned sample from a supermarket in Eastern District for testing. The test result showed that the sample contained gluten, but it was not declared on the food label. The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of product. The distributor concerned has initiated a recall on the affected batch of product. For enquiries about the recall, members of the public may call the distributor's hotline at 6330 0136 during office hours. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

"Individuals who are intolerant to gluten may develop symptoms like vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and rash upon consumption," he added.

The spokesman advised consumers who are intolerant to gluten not to eat the affected batch of product, and to seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after consuming the food. The trade should also stop using or selling the above batch of the affected product immediately should they possess it.

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. An investigation is ongoing.