

Sample of mushroom imported from Japan in breach of food labelling regulations

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 25) said that a kind of prepackaged mushroom imported from Japan has been found to contain a preservative, sulphur dioxide, that was not declared on the product's food label, in breach of the food labelling regulations. Follow-up is in progress.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Hana Donko (Oitakenshiitake Oitaken Dried Hana Donko Shiitake Mushroom)

Place of origin: Oita Prefecture, Japan

Net content: 100 grams

Best-before date: August 3, 2019

"Subsequent to announcing earlier that a prepackaged mushroom sample taken from a supermarket in Central was detected with sulphur dioxide that was not declared on its food label, the CFS took a mushroom sample of the same kind but of a different batch from the same supermarket for testing during follow-up investigation. A similar irregularity was detected with the test result showing that the sample also contained sulphur dioxide which was not declared on its food label," a CFS spokesman said.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop sale and remove from shelves all batches of the affected product. The CFS is also tracing the source of the affected product. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted," the spokesman added.

The spokesman pointed out that although the level of sulphur dioxide contained (41 parts per million) in the above-mentioned sample is within the legal limit, susceptible individuals who are allergic to sulphur dioxide may experience breathing difficulties, headache and nausea if they consume this kind of food.

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

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