

Sample of Shanghai noodles detected with excessive preservative

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (July 29) that a sample of loose-packed Shanghai noodles was found to contain a preservative, benzoic acid, at a level exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "Subsequent to announcing earlier that a sample of Shanghai noodles taken from a shop in Tin Shui Wai was found to contain excessive benzoic acid, the CFS took a sample of Shanghai noodles from another shop in Kwai Chung for testing and the test result showed that the sample contained benzoic acid at a level of 1 800 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 1 000 ppm. A follow-up investigation found that the two batches of Shanghai noodles were from the same local manufacturer."

The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed the vendor to stop the sale of the affected product. Prosecution will be instituted should there be sufficient evidence.

Benzoic acid is a preservative of low toxicity. Based on the level detected in the sample, adverse health effects will not be caused under usual consumption.

The spokesman reminded the food trade that the use of preservatives in food must comply with the Preservatives in Food Regulation (Cap 132BD). Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action.