

Two kinds of chocolate products may contain undeclared allergens (milk or tree nuts)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (August 10) announced that two kinds of chocolate products manufactured in Canada might contain food allergens, milk and/or tree nuts (cashew, almond and/or hazelnut), but they were not declared on the products' food label. A spokesman for the CFS advised consumers who are allergic to milk and tree nuts not to consume the affected batches of the products. The trade should also stop using or selling the affected products immediately should they possess them.

Details of the products are as follows:

Product name: Dark Chocolate Almonds

Brand: Organic Traditions

Pack size: 100g

Place of origin: Canada

Importer: Jireh International Health Ltd

Best-before date: (i) February 28, 2023, and (ii) March 28, 2023

Product name: Dark Chocolate Hazelnuts

Brand: Organic Traditions

Pack size: 100g

Place of origin: Canada

Importer: Jireh International Health Ltd

Best-before date: (i) January 30, 2023, and (ii) March 8, 2023

"The CFS received a notification from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency through the International Food Safety Authorities Network that the manufacturer of the products concerned is recalling the affected batches of the above-mentioned products because they may contain food allergens, milk and/or tree nuts (cashew, almond and/or hazelnut), but they are not declared on the products' food label. Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately followed up with the local importer concerned. A preliminary investigation confirmed that the above-mentioned importer had imported the affected batches of the products. The importer concerned has stopped sale and removed from shelves the affected products and initiated a recall according to the CFS's instructions. Members of the public can call the importer's hotline at 2838 8902 for enquiries during office hours about the recall," the spokesman said.

The spokesman advised consumers who are allergic to milk, cashew, almond and hazelnut to stop consuming the products concerned, and they should seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after consuming them.

"People who are allergic to milk, cashew, almond and hazelnut may have

immunologic response like vomiting, diarrhoea and rash upon consumption of food containing these allergens. 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 to the incident and will continue to follow up and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.