

Two kinds of prepackaged protein bars may contain allergen (peanuts)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (January 17) said that two kinds of prepackaged protein bars manufactured in the United States might contain an allergen, peanuts, but it was not declared on the products' food labels. Consumers who are allergic to peanuts are advised not to eat the products concerned. The trade should also stop using or selling the products concerned immediately.

Product details are as follows:

(1) Product name: Protein Bar, Chocolate Sea Salt
Brand: RXBAR
Place of origin: US
Net weight: 52 grams/1.83 ounces per pack (12 packs per box)
Best-before date: June 30, 2019

(2) Product name: Protein Bar, Mango Pineapple
Brand: RXBAR
Place of origin: US
Net weight: 52 grams/1.83 ounces per pack (12 packs per box)
Best-before date: April 21, 2019

"The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, noted a notice issued by the US authorities concerned that several kinds of RXBAR products are under recall because they may contain peanuts but 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 revealed that an online vendor, Action Panda, had imported a total of eight boxes of the affected batches of the two abovementioned products and some of them were sold. The vendor has stopped sale and removed from shelves the affected batches of products and will initiate a recall according to CFS' instructions. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the vendor's hotline at 5211 8027 during office hours.

"Peanuts are a known food allergen. Those who are allergic to it may develop symptoms like vomiting, diarrhoea, asthma and rash upon consumption. In severe cases anaphylactic shock may even develop," the spokesman said.

He advised consumers who are allergic to peanuts not to consume the products concerned. Those who feel unwell after consuming them should seek medical treatment.

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's ingredients in its label. 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 on-going.