

Veterinary drug chloramphenicol found in two live abalone samples

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (November 22) announced that two live abalone samples were found to contain a veterinary drug, chloramphenicol. The CFS is following up on the incident.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS through its routine Food Incident Surveillance System, had earlier noted an announcement by the Macao authorities about a recall of a batch of 'South African live abalone' imported into Macao by a Hong Kong supplier due to the presence of a prohibited veterinary drug, chloramphenicol. That batch of live abalone had not entered the Hong Kong market. For the sake of prudence, the CFS had enhanced surveillance of live abalone. It collected the two above-mentioned samples from a fresh provision shop in Lok Fu and a stall in Tai Po Hui Market for testing. The test results showed that they contained chloramphenicol at respective levels of 0.65 micrograms per kilogram ($\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$) and 0.56 $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$."

According to the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations (Cap 132AF), no fish (including shellfish) sold in Hong Kong for human consumption is allowed to contain chloramphenicol. Offenders will be liable to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

The spokesman said, "The CFS has informed the vendors concerned of the irregularities and instructed them to stop sale of the affected products. The CFS is tracing the sources of the affected products."

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