

CFS follows up on illegal import of sweet potato and yam from Japan

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (September 5) that 50 cartons of sweet potato (a total of 250 kilograms) from Chiba Prefecture and 10 cartons of yam (a total of 40 kilograms) from Gunma Prefecture, Japan were illegally imported into Hong Kong, breaching the relevant Food Safety Order. None of the products concerned have entered the market. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS inspected a consignment of food imported from Japan and found that the above-mentioned products from Chiba and Gunma Prefectures therein were not accompanied with radiation certificates and exporter certificates issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan, breaching the relevant Food Safety Order. The products concerned have not entered the market and have been marked and sealed by the CFS. The Centre has taken samples of the products concerned for testing of radiation level and no radiation has been detected.

"According to the Order, the import of vegetables, fruit, milk, milk beverages and dried milk from four Japanese prefectures, namely Ibaraki, Tochigi, Chiba and Gunma, must be accompanied with radiation certificates and exporter certificates issued by the MAFF of Japan. The CFS conducts a radiation test on each consignment of Japanese food imported, and requires importers not to sell the products until the test result turns out to be satisfactory. The aforementioned illegal imports were detected by the CFS during inspection and the products concerned did not enter the market. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the CFS' gate-keeping work."

The CFS has informed the Japanese authorities concerned of the incident, and will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Prosecution will be instituted against the importer concerned should there be sufficient evidence. Investigation is ongoing.