

Imported milk sample detected with total bacterial count exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (January 21) that a sample of bottled pasteurised milk imported from the United Kingdom was detected with total bacterial count exceeding the legal limit. The concerned batch of the product has not entered the market. The CFS is following up on the incident.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: English Whole Milk
Product brand: Marks & Spencer
Place of origin: United Kingdom
Importer: ALF Retail Hong Kong Limited
Packing: 1.136 litre per bottle
Use-by date: January 16, 2019

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the abovementioned sample for testing at import level under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the total bacterial count of the sample was 75 000 per millilitre. According to the Milk Regulation (Cap 132 AQ), milk after heat treatment by means of pasteurisation should not contain more than 30 000 bacteria per millilitre.

"The CFS has informed the importer concerned of the irregularity. Investigation revealed that the affected batch of product is still stored in the importer's warehouse and has not entered the local market. The affected product has been marked and sealed by CFS. The CFS has temporarily suspended the permission to import for sale of the product concerned granted earlier to the importer. Other types of milk product of the same brand being sold in the market are not affected. "

The spokesman said that the total bacterial counts exceeding the legal limit indicated that the hygienic conditions were unsatisfactory, but did not mean it would lead to food poisoning.

The CFS has informed the British authorities of the incident, and will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action.