



***Legco Panel on Food Safety & Environmental Hygiene  
Special Meeting on 2 February 2007***

**PARKnSHOP Submission on Oilfish Case**

**Introduction**

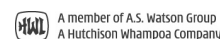
1. Once again, PARKnSHOP would like to APOLOGIZE to the public for the inconvenience caused by the recent fish issue, and in particular to those customers who suffered from digestive discomfort as a result of consuming this fish product. We are a responsible retailer. We take responsibility for the quality of food sold in PARKnSHOP. That's why we reacted responsively by apologizing to the public on 24 January, first through a press statement in the morning and again at our press conference in the evening. That's also why we are present today in front of the Food Safety Panel.
2. What is the issue we are facing today? This is not about food hygiene. The challenge we face is one of **mis-identification of species**. At present, oilfish is sold in a large number of countries in the world. Different names are used to label oilfish in different markets. Currently, there is confusion in the naming of certain frozen fish products that are available to Hong Kong consumers and we do need help. There is an urgent need for clear guidelines to bring consistency to facilitate the trade in the area of species identification.

**What actually happened and what were PARKnSHOP's responses?**

3. The fish product in question was a new product to Hong Kong and was first sold locally early last year. There was not a standard practice in the industry as to how to describe or name this fish. PARKnSHOP started selling this product in the first quarter of 2006. And since there were no regulatory guidelines available at the time, we followed the product name stated on the health certificate from supplier issued by the country of origin, which was 'cod fish'.

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4. We have always acted responsively according to information available to us at the time. The key happenings in chronological order and our response relating to this oilfish case are listed in the attachment 1.
5. PARKnSHOP has acted responsibly upon advice from FEHD. We have NO intention to mislabel this fish.

**Is there a better way to manage fish labeling?**

6. This fish product was NEW at the time. And clearly, this issue is not unique to PNS but to the industry as a whole. Other retailers, caterers are facing the same issue and we all need help.
7. There are hundreds of species of frozen and live fish imported to Hong Kong. At present, the trade relies on certificates from suppliers and reference to overseas practices to name the products. PARKnSHOP sees an urgent need for the relevant authorities, together with the trade, to develop a SYSTEM for labeling and disclosure of product information. We need CLEAR GUIDELINES and PARKnSHOP is most willing to work with the relevant authorities on its development.

**What PARKnSHOP will do going forward?**

8. Meanwhile, at PARKnSHOP we have taken the initiative to start creating a database on frozen fish products with photos, class names, existing common names in the market, recommended common names and scientific names. Once completed, we intend to submit the database to the FEHD and AFCD for verification. We suggest that it could be used as an interim guide for us to monitor the labelling of fish sold in supermarkets and perhaps the industry as a whole.

Attachment 1: Key happenings in chronological order and PARKnSHOP response relating to this oilfish case

Attachment 2: Sample of customer notice put up at point of display

Attachment 3: Sample of label for the fish product

Attachment 4: Practice of naming of Escolar and Oil fish in different countries

Attachment 5: Sample of fish classification

Submitted by PARKnSHOP

2 February 2007

**Attachment 1: The key happenings in chronological order and PARKnSHOP response relating to this oilfish case**

*(PARKnSHOP Submission Paper for Legco Panel on Food Safety & Environmental Hygiene Special Meeting on 2 February 2007)*

<b>Date</b>	<b>What happened</b>	<b>PNS response / actions</b>
30 Aug 2006	FEHD informed PNS of a few customer complaint cases of oily diarrhea after consuming cod fish bought at PNS	Suspended sales pending further investigation and instruction from FEHD
4 Sept 2006		Without further advice from FEHD, resumed sale of cod fish
22 Nov 2006	FEHD called to advise that the product should actually be called 'oil fish'.	PNS revised product name to show 'cod fish (oil fish)' and also put up a customer advisory notice immediately at point of sales for unpacked, and also on pre-packed <i>(please refer to sample in Attachment 2)</i>
18 Jan 2007		After research on international practices, PNS considered European Union Regulation (EC No. 2074/2005) and made changes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Selling of fish in pre-packed format, not unpacked</li> <li>▪ Labelling both names in bilingual - 'cod fish (oil fish)' &amp; scientific name <i>Ruvettus pretiosus</i> in English</li> <li>▪ Putting a bilingual warning notice on every pack.</li> </ul> <i>(please refer to sample in Attachment 3)</i>
19 Jan 2007	We initiated a meeting with FEHD to show them our latest practice. At the same meeting, FEHD verbally advised PNS to stop selling this fish product.	PNS stopped selling oil fish immediately on 20 Jan 2007.

**Attachment 2: Sample of customer notice put up at point of display**

(PARKnSHOP Submission Paper for Legco Panel on Food Safety & Environmental Hygiene Special Meeting on 2 February 2007)

**附件二：店內顧客告示樣本**

(二零零七年二月二日立法會食物安全及環境衛生事務委員會特別會議百佳超級市場簡報)



**Attachment 3: Sample of label for the fish product**

(PARKnSHOP Submission Paper for Legco Panel on Food Safety & Environmental Hygiene Special Meeting on 2 February 2007)

**附件三：產品標示樣本**

(二零零七年二月二日立法會食物安全及環境衛生事務委員會特別會議百佳超級市場簡報)



**鱈魚Codfish(油魚Oilfish/Ruvettus pretiosus)**

本魚類產品含有豐富天然魚油，少部份顧客可能腸胃未能適應，因此百佳有以下建議：

1. 假如閣下是初次購買，建議先進食少量。
2. 假如進食本魚產品後曾經出現腸胃不適，請停止進食本產品，如有需要，可徵詢醫生意見。
3. 懷孕婦女及有腸胃問題之顧客應避免進食本魚類產品。

The Fish oil naturally present in this fish may cause some digestive discomfort in a minority of people, PARKnSHOP therefore would like to advise our customers that:

1. When eating this fish for the first time, consume only a small portion.
2. If digestive discomfort is experienced, do not consume the fish in the future and you may like to seek medial advice.
3. Pregnant women or people with a bowel condition are advised not to consume this fish.

**Attachment 4: Practice of naming of Escolar and Oil fish in different countries**

(PARKnSHOP Submission Paper for Legco Panel on Food Safety & Environmental Hygiene Special Meeting on 2 February 2007)

**Practice of naming of Escolar and Oil fish in different countries**

The *Gempylidae* family (蛇鯖科) contains five genera. Among these, two genera, each containing one species, are Oilfish (*Ruvettus pretiosus* 棘鳞蛇鯖) and Escolar (*Lepidocybium flavobrunneum* 異鳞蛇鯖).<sup>1</sup>

Country	Names	Advice given by local authority
<b>Asia</b>		
Japan		Import and consumption banned since 1977 - Stated by European Food Safety Authority
<b>North America</b>		
United States	Escolar is also called mackerel, butterfish, oil fish, castor oil fish, rudderfish, waluu or gemfish.	FDA banned oil fish import in 1990s; the ban was lifted several years later, while FDA discourages the importation and interstate marketing of the fish. - Washington State Department of Health
Canada	Escolar is also called oil fish, gemfish or rudderfish.	The scientific name must be given including the genus and species of the fish - Canada Food Inspection Agency  Certain individuals who have eaten Escolar can experience a rapid onset of diarrhea which is often oily and orange/yellow in colour. Import is permitted provided the products meet general regulatory requirements. - BC Centre for Disease Control
<b>Australia</b>		
Australia	Escolar is also known as oil fish and black oil fish, often marketed as rudderfish	The fish is not used for catering purposes. - Queensland Health Public Health Unit - Department of Health, Government of South Australia
<b>Europe</b>		
European Union		Ruvettus pretiosus and Lepidocybium flavobrunneum, may only be placed on the market in wrapped/packaged form and must be appropriately labelled to provide information to the consumer on preparation/cooking methods and on the risk related to the presence of substances with adverse gastrointestinal effects. The scientific name must accompany the common name on the label. - Stated in the Official Journal of the European Union
Italy		Import and consumption banned - Stated by European Food Safety Authority
Sweden & Denmark		The fish must be prepared in such a way that most of the fat could be separated from the dish. The cooking liquid must not be used for preparation of sauce. Cooking recommendations must be available where they are offered for sale. Due to their high content of histidine the storage time should be kept short and the storage conditions should be adjusted accordingly.

<sup>1</sup> The EFSA Journal (2004) 92,1-5,  
[http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/science/contam/contam\\_opinions/609.Par.0001.File.dat/opinion\\_contam\\_07\\_ej92\\_gempylidae\\_en1.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/science/contam/contam_opinions/609.Par.0001.File.dat/opinion_contam_07_ej92_gempylidae_en1.pdf)

Country	Names	Advice given by local authority
		- Stated by European Food Safety Authority
Germany		The German federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has also published information concerning potential problems in connection with the consumption of these species of fish. - Stated by European Food Safety Authority
United Kingdom	Escolar possibly mislabeled as sea bass	Category D Food Hazard Warning issued by Food Standards Agency in 2003. Enforcement Officers are asked to ensure that there are no cases of mis-describing this particular species of fish. - Food Standards Agency

Reference:

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l\\_338/l\\_33820051222en00270059.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_338/l_33820051222en00270059.pdf)

[http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/science/contam/contam\\_opinions/609.Par.0001.File.dat/opinion\\_contam07\\_ej92\\_gempylidae\\_en1.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/science/contam/contam_opinions/609.Par.0001.File.dat/opinion_contam07_ej92_gempylidae_en1.pdf)

<http://www.bccdc.org/downloads/pdf/fps/reports/ESCOLAR.pdf>

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/escolarletter.pdf>

[http://www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/EpiTrends/04\\_epitrends/epitrends\\_dec04.pdf](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/EpiTrends/04_epitrends/epitrends_dec04.pdf)

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/fispoi/import/notinste.shtml>

**Attachment 5: Sample of fish classification**

(PARKnSHOP Submission Paper for LegCo Panel on Food Safety & Environmental Hygiene Special Meeting on 2 February 2007)

**附件五：魚類分類式樣**

(二零零七年二月二日立法會食物安全及環境衛生事務委員會特別會議百佳超級市場簡報)

**Fish Classification 魚產品分類目錄**



Classification (Order) 分類 (目)		Common Name in the Market 通用名稱		Recommended Common Name 建議名稱		Scientific Name 學名	
English	中文	English	中文	English	中文		
Gadiformes	鱈形目	Haddock	黑線鱈魚 / 黑鐸	Haddock	黑線鱈魚	Melanogrammus aeglefinus	
Gadiformes	鱈形目	Alaska Pollack	鱈魚	Alaska Pollack	鱈魚	Theragra chalcogramma	
Scorpaeniformes	鮨形目	Black Cod	銀鱈魚	Sablefish	裸蓋魚	Anoplopoma fimbria	
Perciformes	鱸形目	Green Grouper	青斑	Orange-spotted Grouper	青斑	Epinephelus coioides	
Perciformes	鱸形目	Tiger Grouper	老虎斑	Brown-marbled Grouper	老虎斑	Epinephelus fuscoguttatus	
Perciformes	鱸形目	Flowery Grouper	花頭梅	Starspotted Grouper	花頭梅	Epinephelus hexagonatus	
Perciformes	鱸形目	Honey Comb Grouper	金錢斑	Honey Comb Grouper	金錢斑	Epinephelus merra	