



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局

Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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Clerk to Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Miss Josephine SO)
(Fax: 2509 9055)

Dear Miss SO,

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Information Requested by Members**

Nutrition Labelling Scheme

Legibility requirement for nutrition labels of the prepackaged food products

When reduction of sugar and salt content in food was discussed at the Panel, the Administration was requested to provide information on the enforcement actions including prosecution taken against non-compliance with the legibility requirements for nutrition labels of prepackaged food products under the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) since the publication of the Public Accounts Committee Report No. 57 in February 2012 which covered, inter alia, food labelling.

The Administration was also requested to provide details of the case(s) which involved illegible nutrition label since the issuance of the Trade Guidelines on Preparation of Legible Food Label in May 2012 and the follow-up actions taken by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) on the case(s).

There were no non-compliance cases involving illegible nutrition labels for the period from February to December 2012. In 2013, CFS issued eight warning letters requiring the traders concerned to comply with the legibility requirements for nutrition labels of prepackaged food products within 60 days. The products involved were prepackaged cookies, biscuits, cakes, canned fishes, tea drinks and potato crisps. In four cases, the spacing between words on the nutrition labels was found to be inadequate. For the rest, some words faded out (three cases) or were diffused (one case). Follow-up inspections found that the product labels were revised in five cases, and in the remaining three cases the products were no longer available for sale.

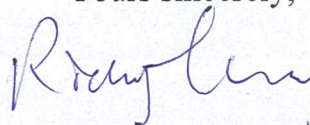
CFS initiated prosecution against two traders for sale of prepackaged food products with non-compliant nutrition labels, one in 2014 and one in 2015. The two cases involved a food product with illegible expiry date on the label and another with illegible nutrition label. The products were found not for sale during follow-up inspections. The two cases were convicted in May and June 2015 respectively with a fine of \$15,000 for each case.

Small Volume Exemption ("SVE") scheme for prepackaged food products with annual sales volume of 30 000 units or below

When the implementation of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme was discussed at the Panel, the Administration was requested to provide information on the number of samples of SVE products taken for testing under the annual sampling programme of CFS over the past three years and whether there were any non-compliance cases with the relevant food safety legislation.

From 1 July 2010 to 29 January 2016, CFS visited 361 grantees (persons to whom the exemption were granted), and also examined 982 exempted products. Based on the examination, CFS issued a total of 41 verbal warnings. In addition, CFS issued 12 letters, asking for an explanation for the irregularities within 21 days. All grantees involved either rectified the irregularities or stopped selling the concerned products. As for the cases in which sale records were not reported on time, CFS issued 374 letters, asking for an explanation for the irregularities. Other than five grantees who ceased operation during the investigation, the rest rectified the irregularities.

Yours sincerely,



(Ricky Cheng)

for Secretary for Food and Health

cc: Controller, Centre for Food Safety (Fax: 2536 9731)