



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

本函檔案 Our ref. : FHB/F/5/1/44
來函檔案 Your ref. : CB2/PL/FE

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29 January 2015

Clerk to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Alice LEUNG)
(Fax: 2509 9055)

Dear Ms Leung,

**Request for Follow-up Actions on
McDonald's Japan's Food Incidents**

Thank you for referring to us a letter dated 12 January 2015 from Hon Helena Wong to the Chairman of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene. In the letter, the Administration was requested to conduct investigation and follow-up on the ingredients used by McDonald's Hong Kong in light of a string of food incidents that had happened at McDonald's restaurants in Japan and to provide a response in writing. Food incidents mentioned in the letter include:

- (a) plastic film found in Chicken McNugget at an outlet in Aomori Prefecture;
- (b) tooth found in French fries at an outlet in Osaka Prefecture;
- (c) plastic film found in chocolate sundae at an outlet in Fukushima Prefecture;
- (d) metal fragments found in hotcake at an outlet in Kyoto Prefecture; and
- (e) styrofoam found in McMuffin at an outlet in Okinawa.

2. The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) closely monitors food incidents occurring in Hong Kong, the Mainland and other countries and takes actions accordingly to ensure food safety in Hong Kong and protect public health on a daily basis

Plastic found in Chicken McNugget at an outlet in Aomori Prefecture

3. CFS noted on 7 January 2015 through its Food Incident Surveillance System that a plastic film was found in Chicken McNugget sold at a McDonald's outlet in Aomori Prefecture of Japan in January. As the plastic might have entered the food when the food was manufactured in the plant in Thailand, McDonald's Japan announced that they would stop selling Chicken McNuggets that were produced on the same day at the same plant. There had been media reports that the affected Chicken McNuggets were supplied by Cargill Inc.'s Thai unit. The Chicken McNuggets were delivered to McDonald's outlets in 14 prefectures of Japan and almost all of them had already been sold.

4. Upon learning the incident, CFS has taken proactive follow-up actions. CFS officers met with the management of McDonald's Restaurants (Hong Kong) Limited (McDonald's Hong Kong) on 9 January to follow-up on the incidents and obtain relevant documents for inspection. According to the information provided by McDonald's Hong Kong, they source their Chicken McNuggets from the same Thai supplier as McDonald's Japan. But the Chicken McNuggets supplied to Hong Kong were produced on a different production line with different batches, production numbers and packaging. McDonald's Hong Kong supplemented that they had commissioned an independent testing and certification company to carry out tests on their Chicken McNuggets and the laboratory test results did not reveal any problem.

5. Cargill Inc. and McDonald's Japan announced on 14 January that the plastic film found in the food incident in Aomori Prefecture was not from Cargill-owned plant in Thailand. CFS has approached the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong to obtain information on the follow-up actions taken by the Japanese authorities and is still awaiting for their reply. CFS will maintain liaison with the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong.

6. McDonald's Japan also announced on 7 January 2015 that a plastic film was found in Chicken McNugget at its Tokyo's outlet. However, the colour of this plastic film was different from the one found in the food incident in Aomori Prefecture. After investigation, McDonald's Japan considered that the incident was not related to the manufacturing process of the Cargill's plant in Thailand and thus had not stopped using the same batch of Chicken McNuggets. For prudence sake, CFS has approached the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong for further information and is still awaiting their response.

Tooth found in French fries at an outlet in Osaka Prefecture

7. McDonald's Japan also revealed on 7 January 2015 that a customer had complained in late August last year about the finding of a plastic-like object, which turned out to be a human tooth after investigation, in French fries bought at a McDonald's outlet in Kawachinagano, Osaka Prefecture. How the object was introduced into the food remains unclear. According to information provided by McDonald's Hong Kong, they had sourced French fries from the same American supplier as McDonald's Japan but of different batches, packaging and manufacturing dates. McDonald's Hong Kong has recently switched to other sources of French fries because of a labor dispute at the West Coast of the United States.

Plastic found in chocolate sundae at an outlet in Fukushima prefecture

8. McDonald's Japan said on 7 January 2015 that a plastic object was found in a chocolate sundae sold at an outlet in Fukushima Prefecture in December last year. After investigation, the plastic piece was confirmed to have come from the damaged part of a machine that produced the affected food at the outlet and did not involve manufacturing process in the plants. CFS has approached the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong for further information and is still awaiting their response.

Metal fragments found in hotcake at an outlet in Kyoto and styrofoam found in McMuffin at an outlet in Okinawa

9. CFS has made enquiries with McDonald's Hong Kong about the above captioned food incidents. The company said no such information was available and they would have to find out from their Japanese counterpart. CFS will continue to follow-up and keep in touch with McDonald's Hong Kong.

Other follow-up actions by CFS in light of the above incidents

10. The above incidents might be associated with operational problems in transportation and in some of the branches of McDonald's Japan. In light of this, CFS officers have met with staff of McDonald's Hong Kong and visited their outlets to find out about their food safety and quality control measures. It is noted that McDonald's Hong Kong has in-house mechanism to ensure the safety and quality of their food and no food safety issues were detected by CFS.

11. CFS will continue to actively follow-up the incidents, including maintaining close liaison with McDonald's Hong Kong and the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong. Appropriate follow-up actions will be taken having regard to the developments of the incidents to ensure food safety in Hong Kong.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Lai', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Henry LAI)

for Secretary for Food and Health