

Health warning as food product recalled over Listeria outbreak

Bahrain received shipments of only one product that could have been possibly contaminated

TDT|Manama
Mohammed Zafran

A frozen food product is being recalled from the market over worries about it being contaminated with deadly Listeria bacteria.

The Listeria outbreak concern has come in the form of a frozen corn product imported from Europe.

Although a total of 43 different products by a number of different companies are believed to have been contaminated, Bahrain has only received shipments of one product which is believed to have a possibility of being contaminated, according to sources.

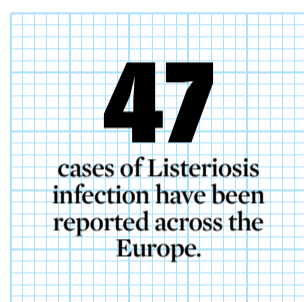
The product in question is frozen sweetcorn product by the brand 'Penguin'.

The Ministry of Health released a statement yesterday warning customers against purchasing or consuming the product and urging sellers to remove it from the market.

"The Ministry received a notification from The International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) of the World Health Organisation with regards to concerns about frozen products by the Penguin brand. In its notification, the organization informed about the Listeria outbreak and the withdrawal of the products from markets of a number of European Union countries," the ministry stated.



It is suspected that many sweetcorn products got infected with the bacteria.



Authorities have already informed the sellers and relevant companies to remove the products from the brand which were packed between August 13, 2016 and 20 June, 2018.

The Ministry stated that the products

must not be consumed and rather be returned to the seller while sellers of the products are urged to follow the required procedures.

Apart from Penguin Sweetcorn, other products from well known brands to be recalled globally include Tesco Frozen Every Day Value Sweetcorn, Ross Basic Mixed Vegetables, Sainsbury's Frozen Basic Mixed Vegetables, and Lidl Frozen Green Grocer Supersweet Corn.

However, it is not clear whether contaminated shipments of these products have reached Bahrain as no official confirmation has been made on these products.

According to WHO, the outbreak can be traced to frozen vegetables pro-

cessed at a single plant in Hungary. The outbreak has been spreading since 2015 and has resulted in 47 cases.

Hungarian Food Chain Safety Office recently shut down the the factory in which the food was processed. Major product recalls have been made around the world.

Explaining the outbreak, the WHO stated, "Since 2015, an outbreak of invasive listeriosis, caused by the bacteria Listeria Monocytogenes, has been ongoing in five European countries, resulting in 47 cases over a multi-year period. This outbreak has been linked by whole genome sequencing (WGS) to frozen corn and possibly other frozen vegetables processed at a single plant



Listeriosis can lead to hospitalisation and even death. High risk people include elderly, pregnant women, patients undergoing treatment for cancer, and HIV-infected.

in Hungary.

"Since this outbreak has been identified, one case of Listeriosis was reported outside of Europe, in Australia, that was found to be highly related to the current outbreak strain."

"The implicated frozen vegetables have since been recalled from the market. Many of the recalled products were recently determined to have been exported to over 100 countries. The WHO, through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), has been actively engaging with members in recipient countries to ensure distribution details are received and risk management measures are implemented, including recalls and public communication," it said.

This is the second Listeria outbreak concern that has made its way to Bahrain this year.

Rockmelons imported from Australia in April were feared to have been contaminated with the bacteria and were promptly recalled by the health authorities.

Listeriosis can lead to hospitalisation and even death. The milder symptoms of listeriosis are diarrhea and fever.

High risk people such as elderly people, pregnant women, patients undergoing treatment for cancer, and HIV are more likely to suffer from the severe form of the disease which can also cause septicemia and meningitis.

BCCI delegation visits more markets



The delegation interacting with traders at a market.

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Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) delegation paid field visits to the local markets in Sitra, Riffa, Salmabad, Budaiya and Jidhafs.

Led by BCCI Second Deputy Chairman Mohammed Abdul Jabbar Al Kooheji, the delegation also included board member

Sonia Janahi and representatives of ministries, government departments and other official entities.

Members of the BCCI markets committee were also present.

Mr Al Kooheji stressed the chamber's keenness on visiting local markets as part of efforts to meet traders' needs and aspirations and serve the national economy.

He underlined the importance of stepping up all efforts with competent authorities to develop markets to be more attractive for citizens, residents and tourists.

He said that hotline 38212030 functions round the clock to help traders reach out directly to the committee and submit their proposals as well as the challenges they are facing.

Saudi national jailed for vandalism

● The convicted Saudi man was also fined BD300 for committing the crime.

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Ali Tarif

A 45-year-old Saudi man has been jailed for one month after he was convicted of attacking police officers and vandalism.

The defendant is said to have been under the influence of alcohol when he committed the crime.

According to court files, the defendant caused a mayhem

in the office of a private company operating public buses. And police officers had to intervene to end the chaos, and he assaulted them too.

"I went to the company to book a ticket to return to Saudi. I was told the tickets for the trip were sold out. I headed to a local bar and drank alcohol. I returned back to the office for the next trip. But I was denied from taking the bus. I got very angry," the 45-year-old revealed to prosecutors.

It's said that police had to use pepper spray to control the 45-year-old man.

The convicted Saudi man was also fined BD300 for committing the crime.

Long-time resident passes away

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Mrs Rachel Philip, a long-time resident of the Kingdom, passed away in her home state of Kerala in India on Friday. She was 82.

Mrs Philip worked as a tutor at the College of Health Sciences from 1968 to 1987 (19 years).

Her funeral will be held on Sunday at St Thomas Orthodox Church, Kumarapuram, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.



Mrs Rachel Philip

Her immediate survivor include a son.