

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Ashman Street, Monrovia -Liberia

Joint Press Conference

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry

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The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

My colleague, Dr. Wilhelmina Jallah, Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Members of the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen

You will recalled, on January 16, 2019, we invited all of you here to officially inform the public and the international community that the Liberian Government, through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, quarantined a consignment of suspected contaminated pig meat on the local market.

During the Joint Press Conference, hosted by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Health Ministry, you were informed that we were able to quarantined 2,754 Barrels of the pig feet that were brought into Liberia by the Cheaitou Brothers, located at Red Light.

I am sure, we are all aware, that Cheaitou Brothers is one of the major importers of frozen foods in Liberia.

Sample of the suspected pig feet was taken to the National Standards Laboratory.

We wish to re-state that our decision to quarantine the pig meat was based on an earlier alert issued by the European Union to the Ministry of Health that a business house in Liberia was bringing in a consignment of contaminated pig-feet from a slaughter house located in Europe.

The European Union's surveillance on the pig meat showed that it contained salmonella poison.

Upon the issuance of the worldwide alert by the European Union, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry immediately informed its Inspectorate Unit of the Alert. The Inspectorate Unit then moved in to conduct what is known as 'Regulatory Sampling.'

The purpose of today's Press Conference is to give you the outcome of the testing that was conducted by our technical team at the National Standard Laboratory.

The test results showed that majority of the samples of the pig meat submitted for testing were contaminated with Salmonella SPP.

Test Result Number: NSL/RS860-866
Date Issued: January 20, 2019

The test result of the (7) seven Referenced Regulatory Samples (Sample Name-Pig meat , specifically pig feet) and coded as B1 May- 860, B1 August -861, B1 July-862,B2 July-863, B3 July-864, B4 July-865 and B5 July- 866 were analyzed for yeast and mold and Salmonella Spp.

The results show (5) samples (B1 July-862, B2 July- 863, July-864, B4 July- 865 and B5 July-866) detected for Salmonella Spp.

While a sample (B1 May -860) detected for yeast and mold.
Sample coded - B1 August- 861 shows no detection of Salmonella,
yeast or mold.

The Commerce Ministry wishes to reiterate that the greatest interest of the Liberian government, especially under the watchful eyes of President George Manneh Weah, is the Liberian people.

In as much as government welcomes an open and participatory market, it will not equally condone harmful business practices in the country.

Let the message go forth that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry remains committed to ensuring that anyone found in any business practice that endangers the health of the Liberian people will be made to account for their actions in accordance with law.

Thanks!! The floor is now open for questions.