

AV (HS) 1617

## **FOOD SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAMME**

### **POTENTIAL HEALTH ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH CONSUMPTION OF ESCOLAR FISH AND OILFISH**

The purpose of this food hazard information alert is to give advice on the potential health consequences to people consuming the Escolar fish (*Lepidocybium flavobrunneum* and Oilfish (*Revetus pretiosus*), which are also commonly known as butterfish, black oil fish and gemfish. Not everyone who consumes these fish will be affected.

The Escolar fish and Oilfish have a white flesh and are usually supplied as steaks, which may be provided skin-on and bone-in or skinless and boneless. It is likely that many food owners and consumers are unaware of the potential health consequences of consuming Escolar fish or Oilfish. The fish has a high content of indigestible waxy oil. If the fish is not prepared properly and/or eaten in large quantities, it could cause stomach cramps and diarrhoea in some consumers. Grilling is the appropriate cooking method which tends to reduce the heavy fat content in the fish. Additional symptoms may also appear within 3 to 12 hours after eating the fish, which include headache, nausea and vomiting. The illness may be more severe in older people and those with an existing bowel condition.

AVA has instructed the food traders to correctly label the fish so that consumers can correctly identify it.

For further enquires, please contact the Import & Export Division (IED) of Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) at 63257313.

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IMPORT & EXPORT DIVISION  
AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY