



**THE MARINE PRODUCTS EXPORT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
KOCHI -682 036**

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CIRCULAR

Sub : Disinfection of packaging material - Reg

Madam/ Sir,

As you are aware, MPEDA had approached Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad to suggest suitable disinfection protocols for the seafood industry to overcome the issue of alleged detection of Covid-19 nucleic acid material in the packaging material by the Chinese authorities. The scientists of CCMB visited a seafood processing unit and understood the process and collected various samples from different locations of the processing unit & have carried out extensive studies.

Based on the studies CCMB recommends the use of 1% sodium hypochlorite for complete removal of SARS-CoV-2 from both cardboard and LDPE surfaces, so that no SARS-CoV-2 RNA traces are detected by RT-PCR test.

They have also added that "it is important to ensure that the spray covers the entire surface of the packaging material for complete removal of the viral material. The material should be left untouched/ undisturbed for some time so that the hypochlorite performs its function and doesn't get removed."

CCMB gave a contact time of 20 minutes before carrying out the tests during their study.

Therefore, all seafood processing units may be requested to follow the above recommendations by CCMB to alleviate the risk of detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA traces on packaging material.

The handling of such disinfected cartons may be carried out following Covid -19 preventive protocols, and only by workers who are vaccinated with both the doses, and confirmed Covid negative by appropriate means to ensure that there is no contamination during stuffing of containers.

In addition, the unit shall also strictly ensure adherence to Covid -19 preventive protocols in all process steps right from harvest to shipment to avoid contamination risks.

(DR. RAM MOHAN M K)
JOINT DIRECTOR (QC)

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