



15 August 2013

FDA ADVISORY
No. **2013-027**

SUBJECT : CONSUMER TIPS ON BUYING CANNED GOODS IN GROCERIES AND SUPERMARKETS

Hermetically sealed package in food is used to describe the food preservation of tightly sealed finished products using vacuum packing and canning. It includes processed food products in aluminum cans and metal foils. These types of container are used to maintain the integrity of the food inside by sealing off the flow of air that may react with the food inside. Such anaerobic condition does not favor the growth of most microorganisms that cause spoilage of food.

Food intoxication and food spoilage from eating canned foods are almost entirely due to the action of bacteria that have gained entrance inside or remained viable inside after an improper sterilization process despite the anaerobic condition.

It is possible for consumers to detect food spoilage which can lead to food intoxication by closely observing the integrity of the can. Never buy canned goods with dents, especially if found in the seams of the can. Bulging ends may mean that there are leaks in the can or bacteria have colonized inside and produce gases as by-product. Dent or damage canned goods can produce pinhole-size openings which may not be obvious to the consumers. A single pinhole-size opening allows bacteria to enter, grow and spoil the food inside and may produce toxins. A dirty label is an indicator of possible leak of food contents. Rust in canned goods is another indicator of improper storage and handling of food products which may affect the integrity of sealed products. These are all strong indications of food spoilage which can cause food intoxication or food-borne diarrhea.



Fig 1. Example of damaged canned goods

All consumers are advised to be more vigilant by closely examining the canned food products for signs of food spoilage before buying them. Moreover, consumers are enjoined to read the labels, including those that are on sale or offered with discounts.

For more clarifications and more information, please email us at info@fda.gov.ph. To report any food-related illnesses, please email report@fda.gov.ph.


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