

CFS announces food safety report for January

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (February 28) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 4 200 food samples tested were satisfactory except for eight samples that were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was about 99.8 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1 100 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 3 100 samples were taken for chemical and radiation level tests.

The microbiological tests covered pathogens and hygiene indicators; the chemical tests included testing for pesticides, preservatives, metallic contaminants, colouring matters, veterinary drug residues and others; and the radiation level tests included testing for radioactive caesium and iodine in samples collected from imported food from different regions.

The samples comprised about 1 700 samples of vegetables and fruit and their products; about 300 samples of cereals, grains and their products; about 400 samples of meat and poultry and their products; about 600 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 400 samples of aquatic and related products; and about 800 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The eight unsatisfactory samples comprised a prepackaged date sample in breach of the food labelling regulation, two fish ball samples detected with methylmercury at a level that may have contravened the regulations, two samples of prepackaged rice products detected with gluten without being declared on the products' food labels, a radish sample detected with pesticide residues exceeding the legal limit, a frozen confection sample detected with a total bacterial count exceeding the legal limit, and a beef ball sample detected with a non-permitted preservative.

The CFS has taken follow-up action on the unsatisfactory samples including informing the vendors concerned of the test results, instructing them to stop selling the affected food items and tracing the sources of the food items in question.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to ensure that food for sale is fit for human consumption and meets legal requirements. Consumers should patronise reliable shops when buying food and maintain a balanced diet to minimise food risks.