

CFS announces food safety report for March

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 29) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 4 100 food samples tested were satisfactory except for 15 samples that were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was about 99.6 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 500 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 3 600 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 2 000 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 700 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 300 samples of aquatic and related products; and about 400 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The 15 unsatisfactory samples comprised five frozen confection samples detected to contain coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit, two frozen confection samples with a total bacterial count exceeding the legal limit, two papaya samples, a grape sample, a radish sample and a Chinese white cabbage sample detected to have pesticide residues exceeding the legal limit, a dried Chinese white cabbage sample detected to contain excessive chromium, a fresh beef sample found to contain sulphur dioxide and a prepackaged purple yam noodle sample detected to have an antioxidant level exceeding the legal limit.

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.