

CFS announces food safety report for March

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 30) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 4 500 food samples tested were found to be satisfactory except for 18 unsatisfactory samples which were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.6 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1 000 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 3 500 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 1 600 samples of vegetables and fruit and their products; about 300 samples of cereals, grains and their products; about 600 samples of meat and poultry and their products; about 700 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 500 samples of aquatic and related products; and about 800 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The 18 unsatisfactory samples comprised two taro samples with excessive metallic contaminant, one prepackaged mushroom powder sample found with a pesticide, ethylene oxide, and 15 samples of three kinds of frozen confections, one of which was found to contain coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit, while the other 14 samples were detected with coliform bacteria and total bacterial counts exceeding the legal limits.

The CFS has announced the test results of the unsatisfactory samples and conducted follow-up actions, including informing the vendors concerned of the test results, instructing them to stop selling the affected food items, tracing the sources of the food items in question, marking and sealing the affected products at import level, and temporarily suspending the permission to import for sale of the products concerned granted to the importers.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to ensure that food 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.

Separately, as the Japanese Government has commenced the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the CFS will continue enhancing the testing on imported Japanese food, and make reference to the risk assessment results to adjust relevant surveillance work

in a timely manner. The CSF will announce every working day on its dedicated webpage

(www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/daily_japan_nuclear_incidents.html) the radiological test results of the samples of food imported from Japan, with a view to enabling the trade and members of the public to have a better grasp of the latest safety information.