

CFS announces food safety report for May

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (June 28) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 5 500 food samples tested were found to be satisfactory except for 22 unsatisfactory samples which were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.6 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1 300 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 4 200 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 500 samples of cereals, grains and their products; about 600 samples of meat and poultry and their products; about 800 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 800 samples of aquatic and related products; and about 1 100 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The 22 unsatisfactory samples comprised a canned cherry apple in syrup sample; a prepackaged dried porcini sample; a prepackaged dried lily sample; two crab samples and an escolar sample with excessive metallic contaminant; three canned pasta sauce samples found with a pesticide, ethylene oxide; a papaya sample detected with a pesticide residue at levels exceeding the legal limit; three fresh meat samples found to contain sulphur dioxide; two prepackaged oyster sauce samples detected with a preservative exceeding the legal limit; a flat rice noodle sample detected with sulphur dioxide at a level exceeding the legal limit; a sausage sample found to contain sodium nitrite; two fish samples found with malachite green; a prepackaged frozen confection sample detected with coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit; a prepackaged chilled duck wings sample suspected to be contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*; and a bottled malt vinegar sample in breach of food labelling regulations.

The CFS has taken follow-up actions on the above-mentioned 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 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.