

CFS announces food safety report for September

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (October 31) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 4 900 food samples tested were found to be satisfactory except for nine unsatisfactory samples which were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.8 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1 200 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 3 700 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 1 500 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 600 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 500 samples of aquatic and related products; and about 1 200 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The nine unsatisfactory samples comprised a prepackaged almond milk sample and a prepackaged walnut milk sample detected with a non-permitted preservative; a prepackaged date sample detected with sulphur dioxide exceeding the legal limit and in breach of the food labelling regulations; a prepackaged scallop-flavoured noodle sample in breach of food labelling regulation; a baby snack sample suspected to be contaminated with aflatoxin; a chilled duck sample detected with sulfonamides exceeding the legal limit; a ready-to-eat raw oyster sample found with excessive *Escherichia coli*; a cream sample detected with total bacterial count exceeding the legal limit and a passion fruit sample detected with excessive pesticide residue.

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.