

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 6 800 food samples tested were found to be satisfactory except for 12 unsatisfactory samples which were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.8 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 2 000 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 4 800 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 2 100 samples of vegetables and fruit and their products; about 600 samples of cereals, grains and their products; about 700 samples of meat and poultry and their products; about 1 000 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 900 samples of aquatic and related products; and about 1 500 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The 12 unsatisfactory samples comprised a red rice sample with an excessive metallic contaminant; two string bean samples and a papaya sample detected with pesticide residues at levels exceeding the legal limit; a prepackaged frozen jade perch sample detected with a veterinary drug, chloramphenicol; a fresh beef sample found to contain sulphur dioxide; a prepackaged noodle sample detected with sulphur dioxide at a level exceeding the legal limit; a liquid egg yolk sample found to contain sorbic acid; two prepackaged instant congee samples, a prepackaged pepper sauce sample and a prepackaged dumpling 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, in response to the Japanese Government's 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 CFS 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.