

# Sorbet sample detected with total bacterial count exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (July 16) that a chocolate flavour sorbet sample was found to contain a total bacterial count exceeding the legal limit. Follow-up is in progress.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The Centre collected the sorbet sample from a retail outlet of frozen confections in Quarry Bay for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained a total bacterial count of 680 000 per gram, exceeding the legal limit."

Under the Frozen Confections Regulation (Cap 132 AC), frozen confection for sale should not contain more than 50 000 bacteria per gram. The maximum penalty for offenders is a fine of \$10,000 and three months' imprisonment upon conviction. The fact that the total bacterial count exceeded the legal limit indicated that the hygienic conditions were unsatisfactory, but does not mean that consumption would lead to food poisoning.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop selling the affected sorbet immediately. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff concerned, and requested them to carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action including tracing the source of the affected ice-cream to safeguard food safety and public health. Investigation is ongoing.