

Food Safety Report for December 2011

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department



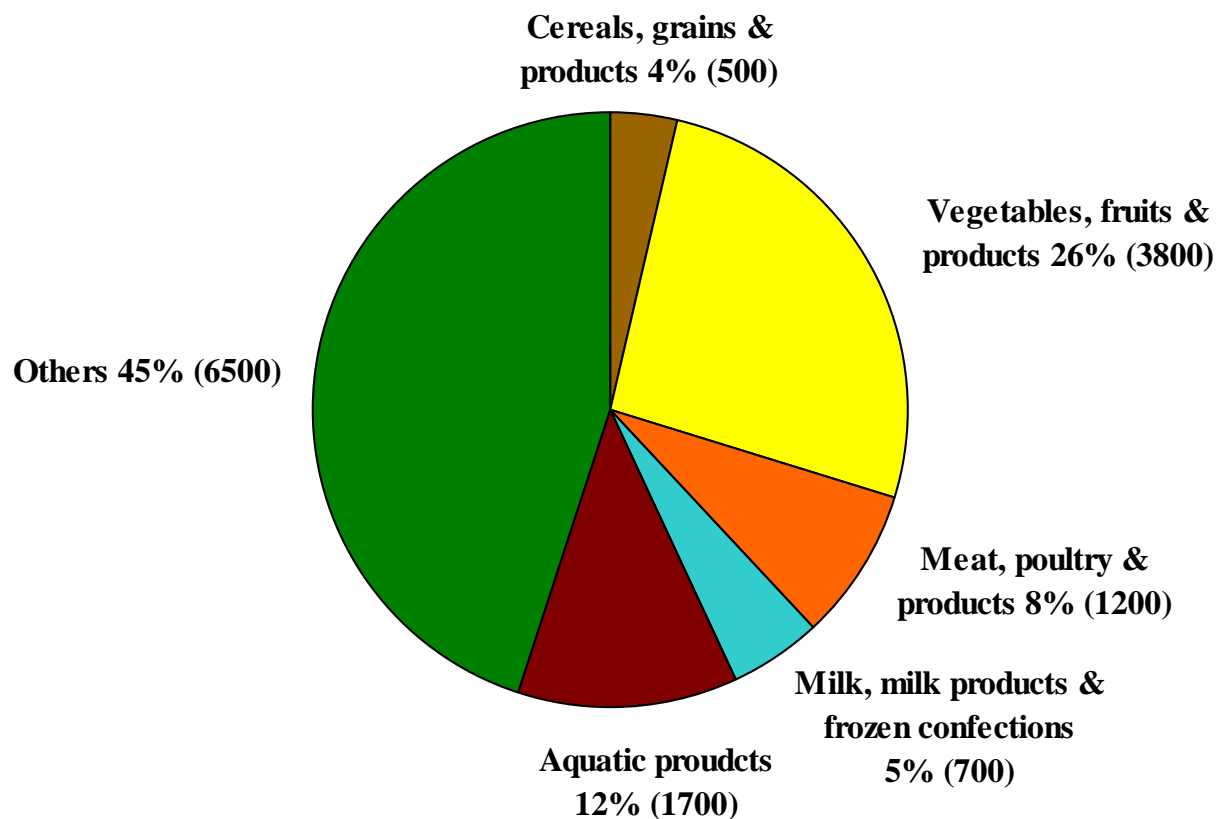
January 2012

Introduction

- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) adopts the three-tier food surveillance approach, i.e. routine food surveillance, targeted food surveillance and seasonal food surveillance to collect samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for microbiological, chemical and radiological tests.
- CFS releases the “Food Safety Report” every month so as to allow the public to obtain the latest food safety information timely. Besides, CFS has released the results of 1 seasonal and 1 targeted food surveillance projects:
 - “Lunar New Year food”
 - “Preservatives in preserved fruits and vegetables”
- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample result analyses in December 2011.

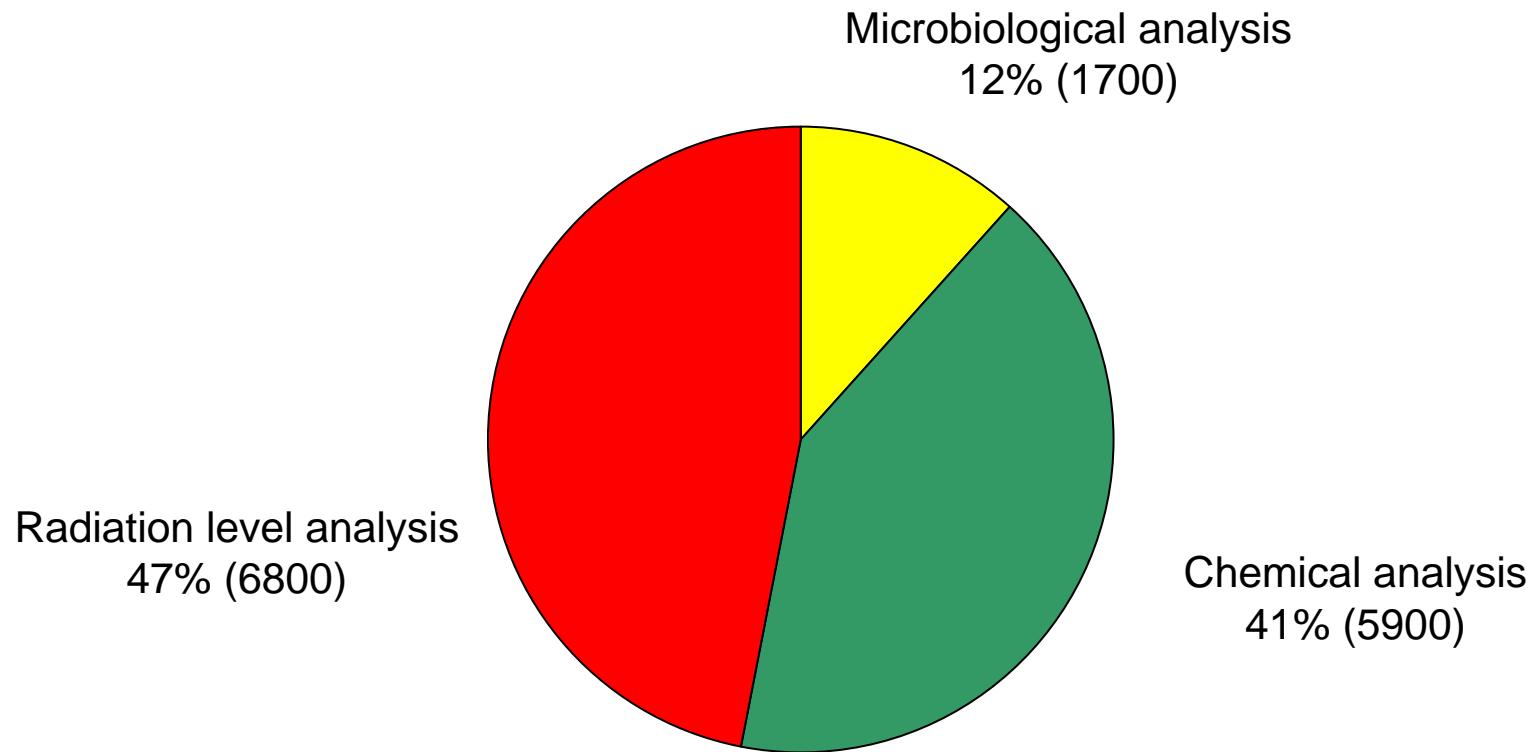
Types of food tested

- About 14400 food samples of various food groups were tested.



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded and may not add up to total due to rounding.

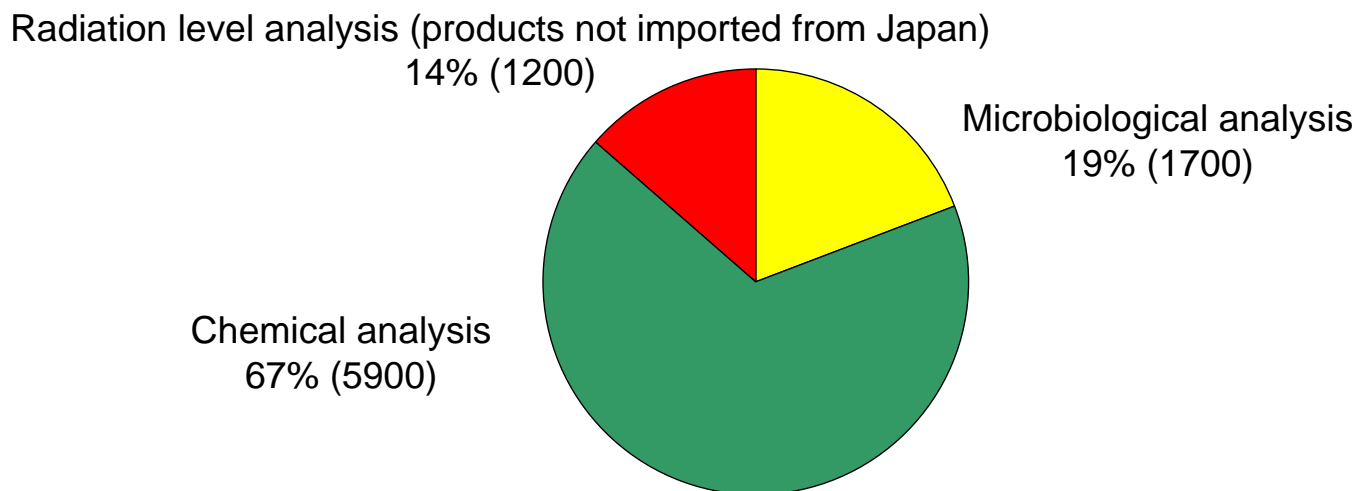
Types of testing



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded and may not add up to total due to rounding.

Types of testing (Cont'd)

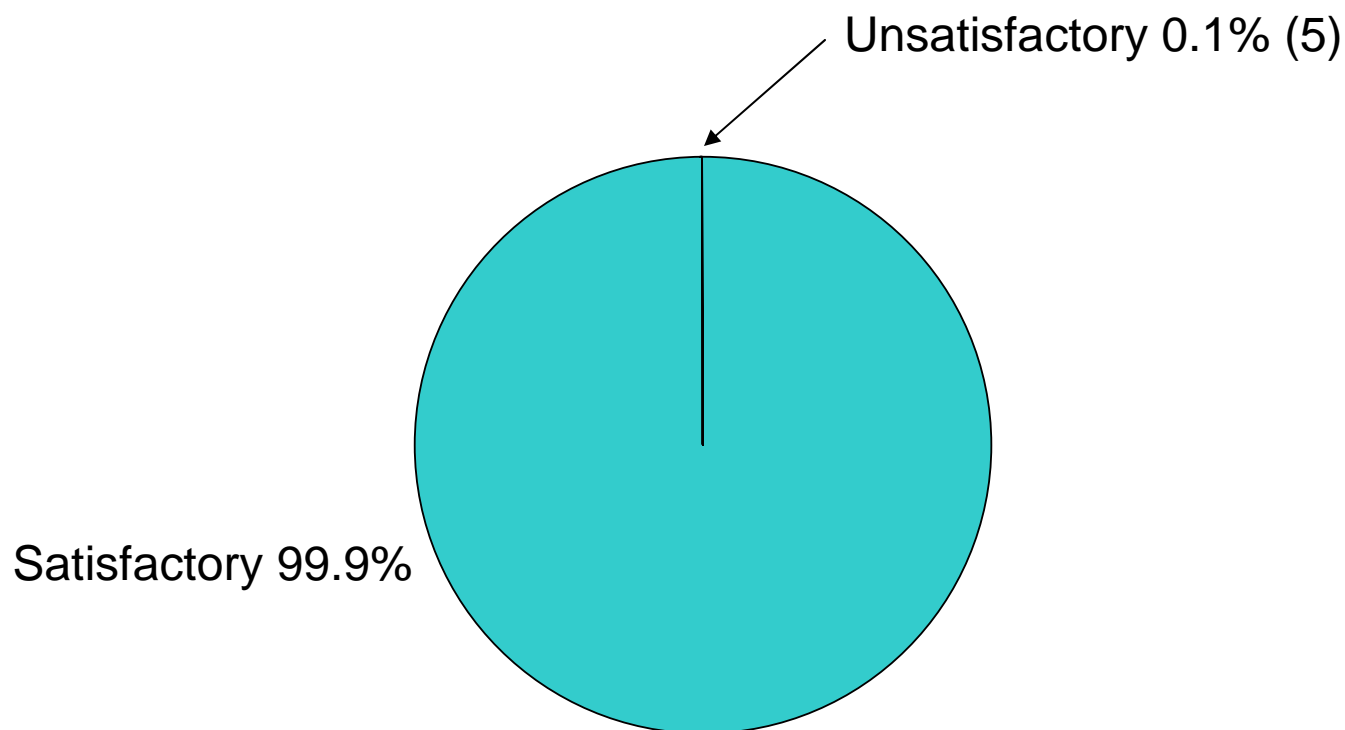
- In response to the Fukushima nuclear power plant incident in Japan, CFS has stepped up surveillance of imported Japanese food for testing of radiation level from mid-March 2011. In December 2011, all the radiation level test results of about 5600 samples were satisfactory.
- Except that, types of testing for the remaining food surveillance samples are distributed as follows:



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded and may not add up to total due to rounding.

Overall results

- There were 5 unsatisfactory samples in total. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%.



Unsatisfactory samples

- 5 unsatisfactory food samples included 3 previously announced results. The remaining 2 unsatisfactory samples were as follows:

Food Group	<i>No. of Samples Tested</i>	<i>No. of Unsatisfactory Samples</i>
Vegetables, fruits & products	3800	0
Meat, poultry & products	1200	1
Aquatic products	1700	0
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	700	1
Cereal, grains & products	500	0
Others	6500	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>14400</i>	<i>2</i>

N.B.: Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

1. Vegetables, fruits & products

- About 3800 samples were collected. They included various kinds of fresh vegetables, fruits and legumes, preserved vegetables and pickled fruits, dried vegetables and ready-to-eat vegetables.
- Analysis included:
 - Microbiological tests
 - Chemical tests such as:
 - Pesticides (e.g. methamidophos, isocarbophos, DDT, HCH)
 - Preservatives
 - Metallic contamination
 - Colouring matters
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%. Except for the previously announced 2 unsatisfactory samples (sweetened winter melon and bamboo fungus) containing sulphur dioxide (preservative), all other samples were satisfactory.



2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 1200 samples were collected. They included fresh, chilled and frozen pork, beef and poultry, ready-to-eat dishes of meat and poultry served at food premises, the meat and poultry made products such as Chinese preserved meat, sausage and ham.
- Analysis included:
 - Microbiological tests
 - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, veterinary drug residues and colouring matters)
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



2. Meat, poultry & products (Cont'd)

Veterinary drug residues

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Roasted duck	Chloramphenicol	0.0003 ppm ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Not permitted in food. However, normal consumption of the product with the detected level was unlikely to pose adverse health effects.

2. Meat, poultry & products (Cont'd)

Other tests

- Samples for other tests (e.g. pathogens, preservatives and colouring matters) were satisfactory.

3. Aquatic products

- About 1700 samples were collected. They generally covered fish, shellfish, shrimp/prawn, crab, squid and their products.
- Analysis included:
 - Microbiological tests
 - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, metallic contamination, biotoxins, veterinary drug residues and colouring matters)
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%. Except for the previously announced 1 unsatisfactory “sliced sea volute” sample [containing Sulphur dioxide (preservative)], all other samples were satisfactory.



4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 700 samples were tested. They included ice-cream, cheese, milk and milk products.
- Analysis included:
 - Microbiological tests (total bacterial count, pathogens e.g. *Salmonella* and *Staphylococcus aureus*)
 - Chemical tests (e.g. melamine, preservatives, veterinary drug residues, colouring matters and sweeteners)
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections (Cont'd)

Microbiological examination

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Frozen confection*	Total bacterial count	250000/g ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Total bacterial count is a hygienic indicator. The detected level exceeded the legal limit.

- * The affected batch of products was marked and sealed by CFS. None of them has entered into the local market.

4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections (Cont'd)

Other tests

- The remaining samples for other tests (e.g. pathogens, melamine, preservatives, veterinary drug residues, colouring matters and sweeteners) were satisfactory.

5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 500 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.
- Analysis included:
 - ❑ Microbiological tests
 - ❑ Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination)
 - ❑ Radiation level tests
- All samples were satisfactory.



6. Other food commodities

- About 6500 food samples were collected. Types included:

Mixed dishes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pathogens, preservatives and colouring matters	Condiments and sauces <ul style="list-style-type: none">Preservatives and colouring matters
Dim Sum <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pathogens and colouring matters	Snack <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pathogens and colouring matters
Beverages <ul style="list-style-type: none">Preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination	Eggs and egg products <ul style="list-style-type: none">Colouring matters and melamine
Sushi and sashimi <ul style="list-style-type: none">Microbiological tests	Others <ul style="list-style-type: none">Plasticisers
Sugar and sweets <ul style="list-style-type: none">Preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination	

- All samples were satisfactory.

Follow-up actions

- Request the vendors concerned to stop sale and dispose of incriminated food items.
- Trace source of food items in question.
- Issue warning letters to the vendors concerned.
- Take follow-up samples for analysis.
- Take prosecution actions if there is sufficient evidence.

Advice to the trade

- Should comply with the legal requirements and follow Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). They should use permitted food additives only in an appropriate manner.
- Retailers should source food from reliable suppliers.
- Maintain a good recording system to allow source tracing if needed.
- The Food Safety Ordinance which introduces a food tracing mechanism is now effective. Upon the expiry of the grace period on 31 January 2012, any person who does not register but carries on a food importation or distribution business; or fails to comply with the record-keeping requirement commits an offence.

Advice to consumers

- Patronize licensed restaurants and reliable retailers.
- Take a balanced diet so as to avoid excessive intake of certain harmful substances as a result of frequent consumption of a small range of food items.