Food Safety Report for February 2013

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department

March 2013

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Introduction

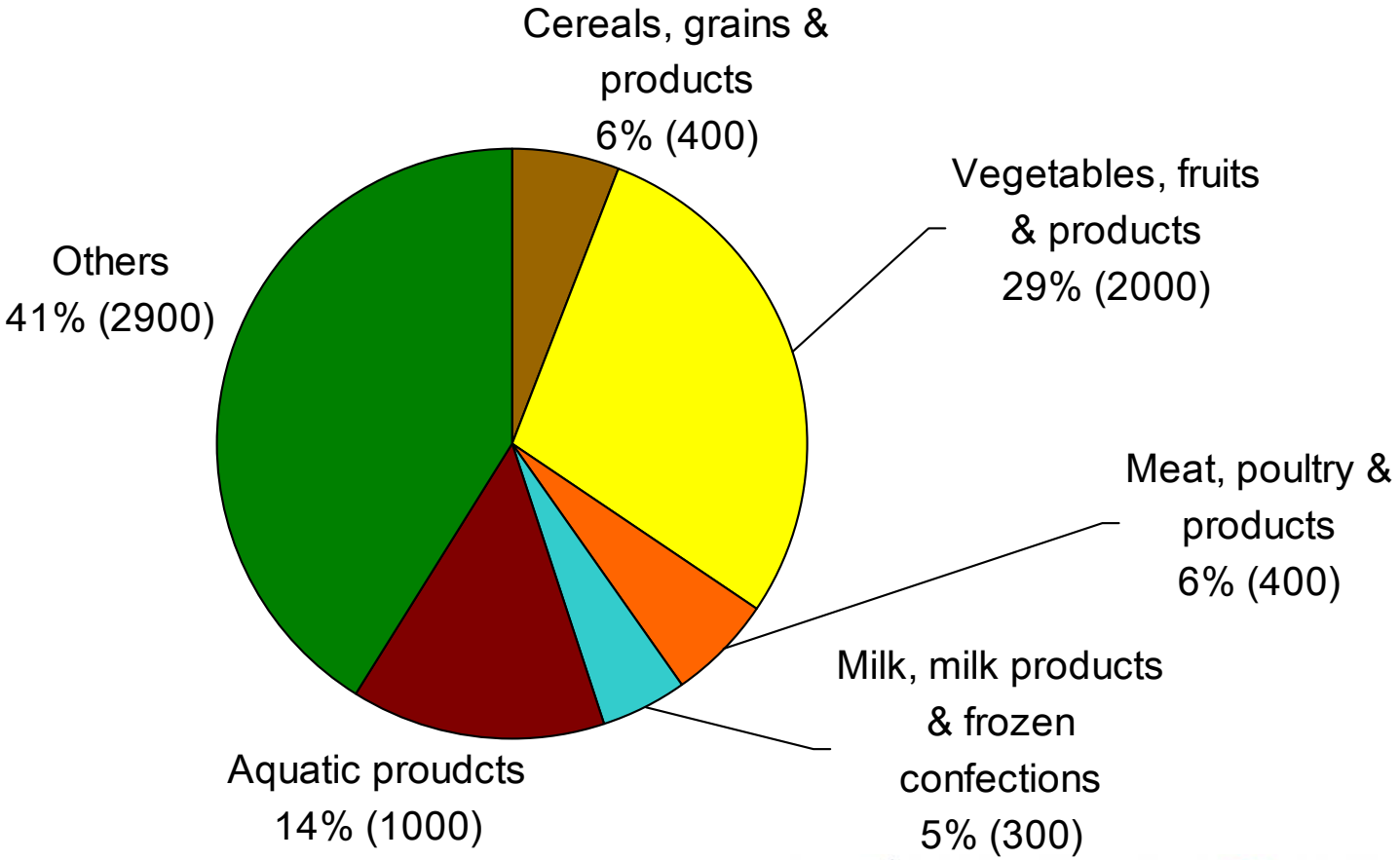
- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) adopts the three-tier food surveillance approach, i.e. routine food surveillance, targeted food surveillance and seasonal food surveillance to collect samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for microbiological, chemical and radiological tests.

- CFS releases the “Food Safety Report” every month so as to allow the public to obtain the latest food safety information timely.

- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample result analyses in February 2013.

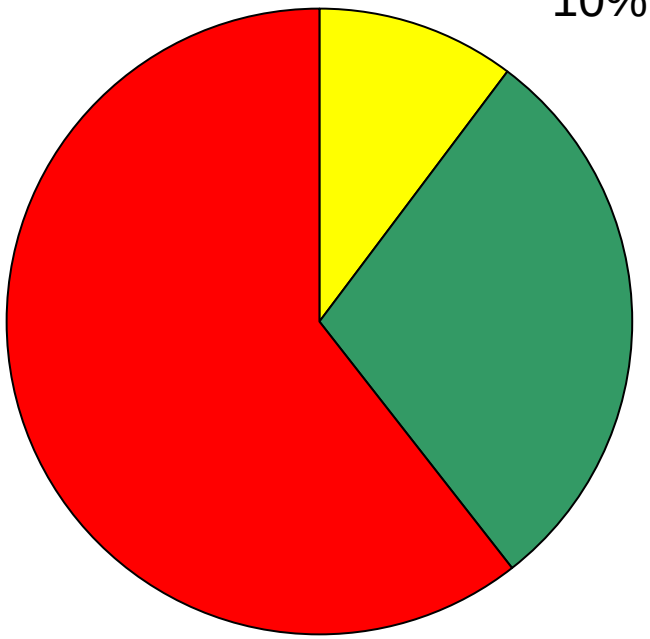
Types of food tested

- About 7100 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



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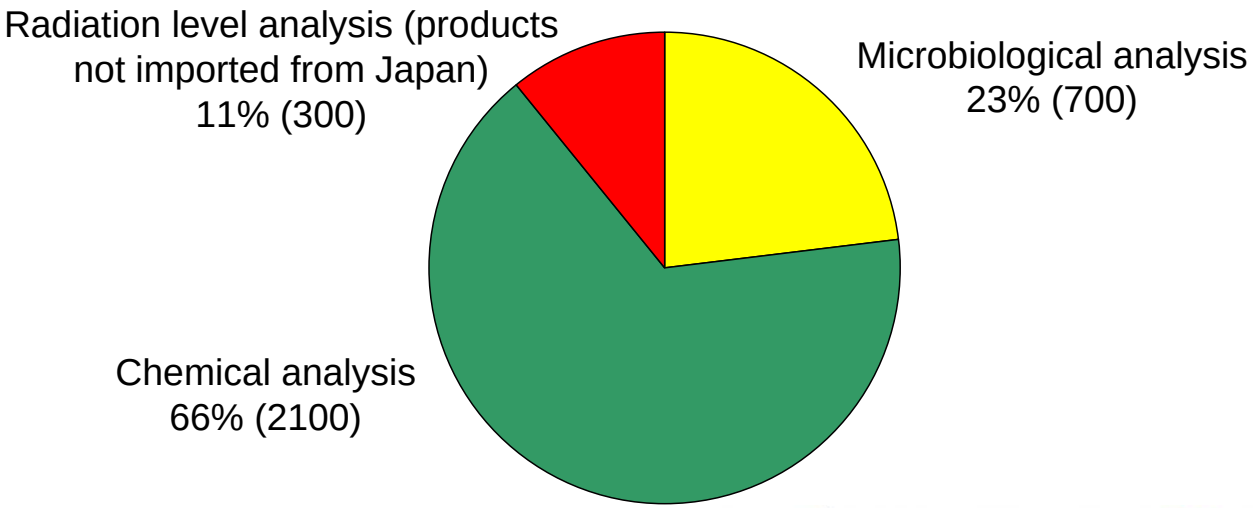
Types of testing (Cont'd)

- 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 February 2013, all the radiation level test results of about 4000 samples were satisfactory.

- Except that, types of testing for the remaining food surveillance samples are distributed as follows:



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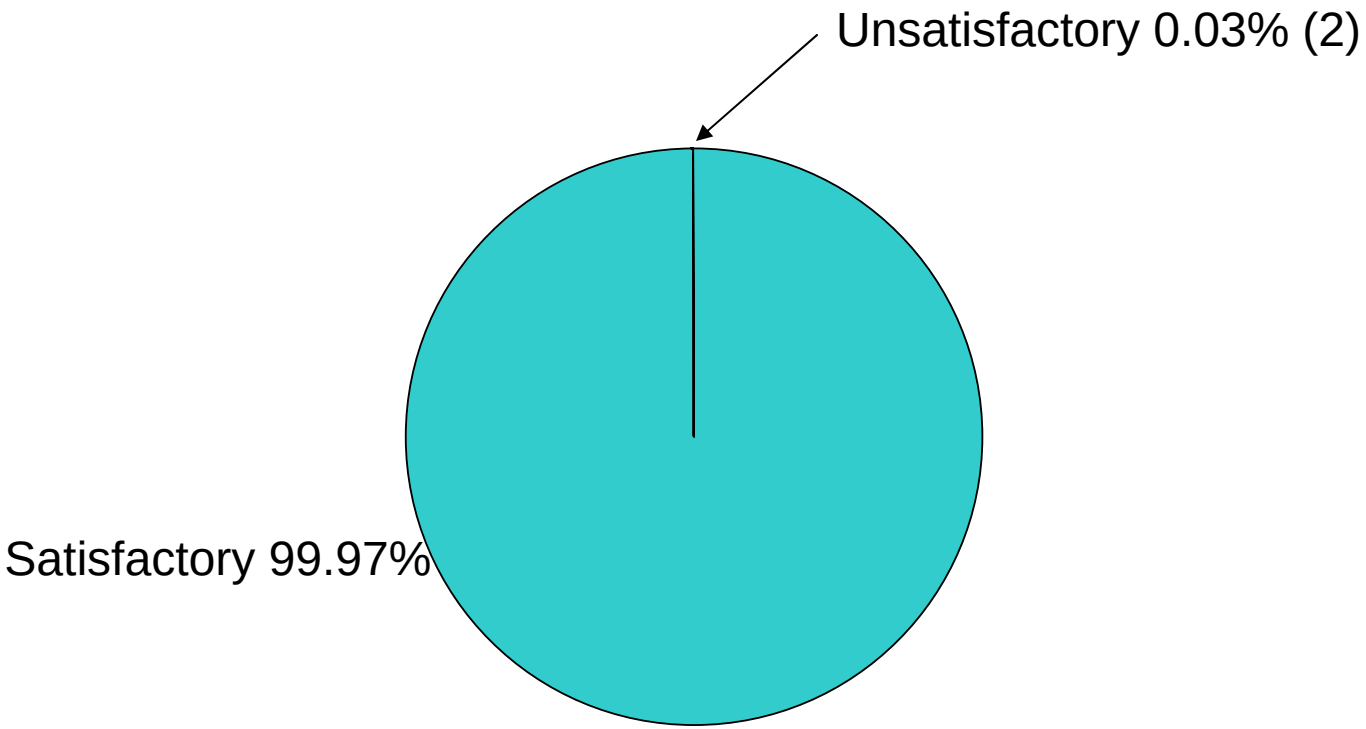
Overall results

- There were 2 unsatisfactory samples. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.97%.



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Unsatisfactory sample

- 2 unsatisfactory food samples are:

Food Group	*No. of Samples Tested*	*No. of Unsatisfactory Samples*
Vegetables, fruits & products	**2000**	**1**
Meat, poultry & products	**400**	**0**
Aquatic & related products	**1000**	**0**
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	**300**	**0**
Cereal, grains & products	**400**	**0**
Others	**2900**	**1**
Total	**7100**	**2**

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

1. Vegetables, fruits & products

- About 2000 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)
    - Metallic contamination
    - Preservatives
    - Pathogens
  - Radiation level tests

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.95%. 1 sample was found unsatisfactory.

1. Vegetables, fruits & products (Cont'd)

Test on pesticide residues

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Chinese flowering cabbage	Carbofuran	1.3 ppm

(1) Occasional consumption will not cause adverse health effect, but consumption on a long-term basis may affect the nervous system.

Other tests

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

2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 400 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

- All samples were satisfactory.





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3. Aquatic and related products

- About 1000 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, toxins and veterinary drug residues)
  - Radiation level tests

- All samples were satisfactory.




4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 300 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 and colouring matters)
  - Radiation level tests

- All samples were satisfactory.




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5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 400 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.

- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, pathogens)
  - Radiation level tests

- All samples were satisfactory.




6. Other food commodities

- About 2900 food samples were collected. Types included:

Mixed dishes ▫ Pathogens and preservatives	Condiments and sauces ▫ Preservatives and colouring matters
Dim Sum ▫ Pathogens , preservatives and colouring matters	Snack ▫ Pathogens and colouring matters
Beverages ▫ Microbiological tests, preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination	Eggs and egg products ▫ Colouring matters and melamine
Sushi and sashimi ▫ Microbiological tests	Others ▫ Plasticisers, preservatives and colouring matters, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
Sugar and sweets ▫ Preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination	

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.97%. 1 sample was found unsatisfactory.

6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

Microbiological test

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Green Papaya Salad	*Salmonella* (pathogen)	Detected (1)

(1) *Salmonella* may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea.

Other tests

- Samples for other tests (e.g. colouring matters, metallic contaminations, veterinary drug residues) were satisfactory.

Follow-up actions

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

Advice for trade

- The trade should always follow the “5 Keys to Food Safety” during food preparation to prevent foodborne disease:
  - Choose - Choose safe raw materials
  - Clean - Keep hands and utensils clean
  - Separate - Separate raw and cooked food
  - Cook - Cook thoroughly
  - Safe Temperature - Keep food at safe temperature
- 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.
- The trade should source food from reliable suppliers and maintain a good recording system in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance to allow source tracing if needed.

Advice for consumers

- Take the following measures in order to reduce the pesticide residues:
  - Wash and soak the vegetables thoroughly.
  - Blanch vegetables in boiling water for one minute and discard the water used for blanching.
  - Remove the outer leaves and peel the vegetables
- Consumers should patronize reliable premises for buying food. They should also maintain balanced diet to minimize food risk.