
Survey on Popular Food Items: Western and fast food style breakfast

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene
Department

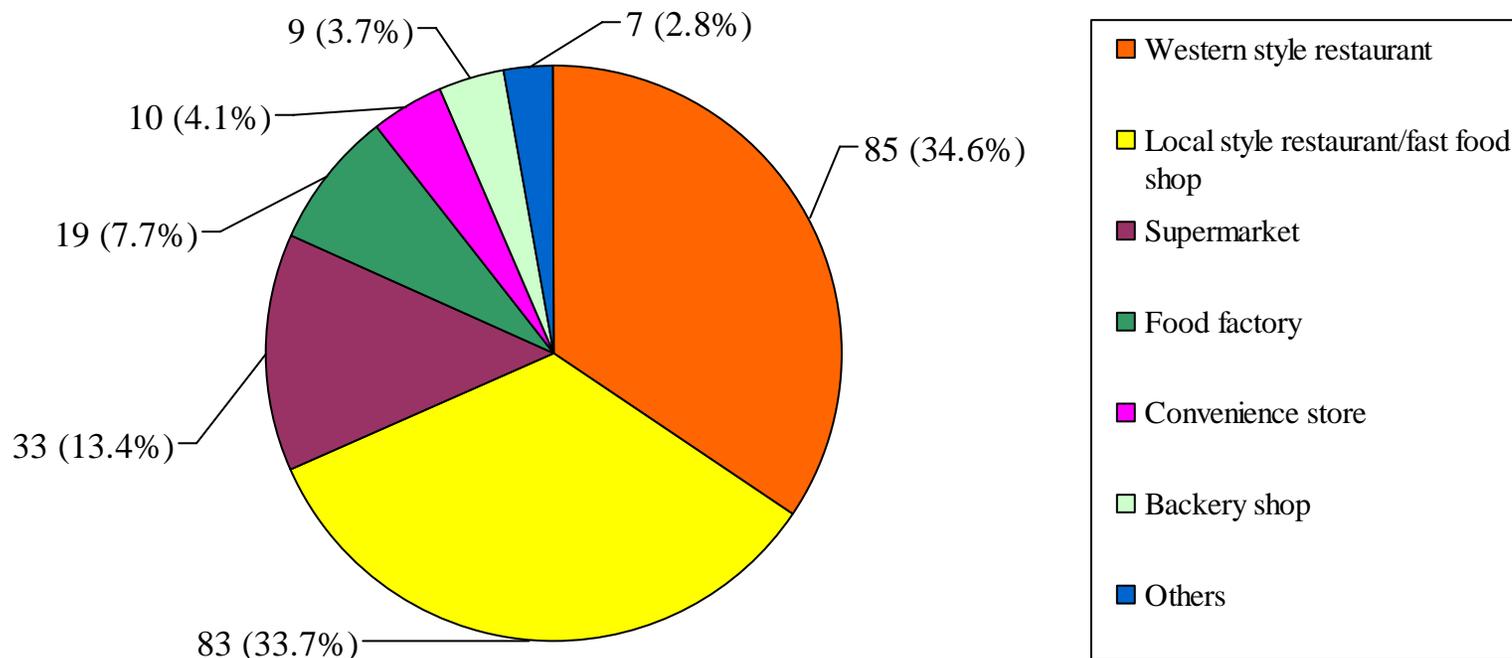
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Background

- Breakfast provides energy required for the morning and is an essential meal.
- Hong Kong is a gourmet paradise. Great variety of Chinese and Western style breakfast items available in the local market are popular foods commonly consumed by the public.
- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has announced a food surveillance report on Chinese breakfast items in May this year.
- This time, the CFS has tested different kinds of Western and fast food style breakfast items to assess their safety.

Sampling locations

- Samples were collected from 246 locations which covered Western style restaurant, local style restaurant or fast food shop, supermarket, food factory, convenience store and bakery shop.



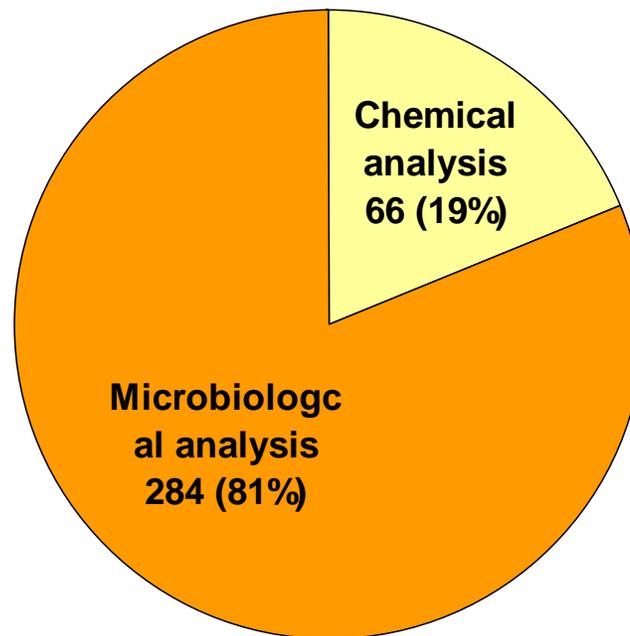
Types of food tested

- 350 samples of various Western and fast food style breakfast items were collected for testing.

Type of food	No. of samples	Percentage
Fish, meat and eggs	68	19.4%
Sandwiches, burgers and breads	65	18.6%
Vegetables, fruits and dairy products	44	12.6%
Cereal products	16	4.6%
Spreads and others	44	12.6%
Beverages	113	32.3%
Total	350	100%

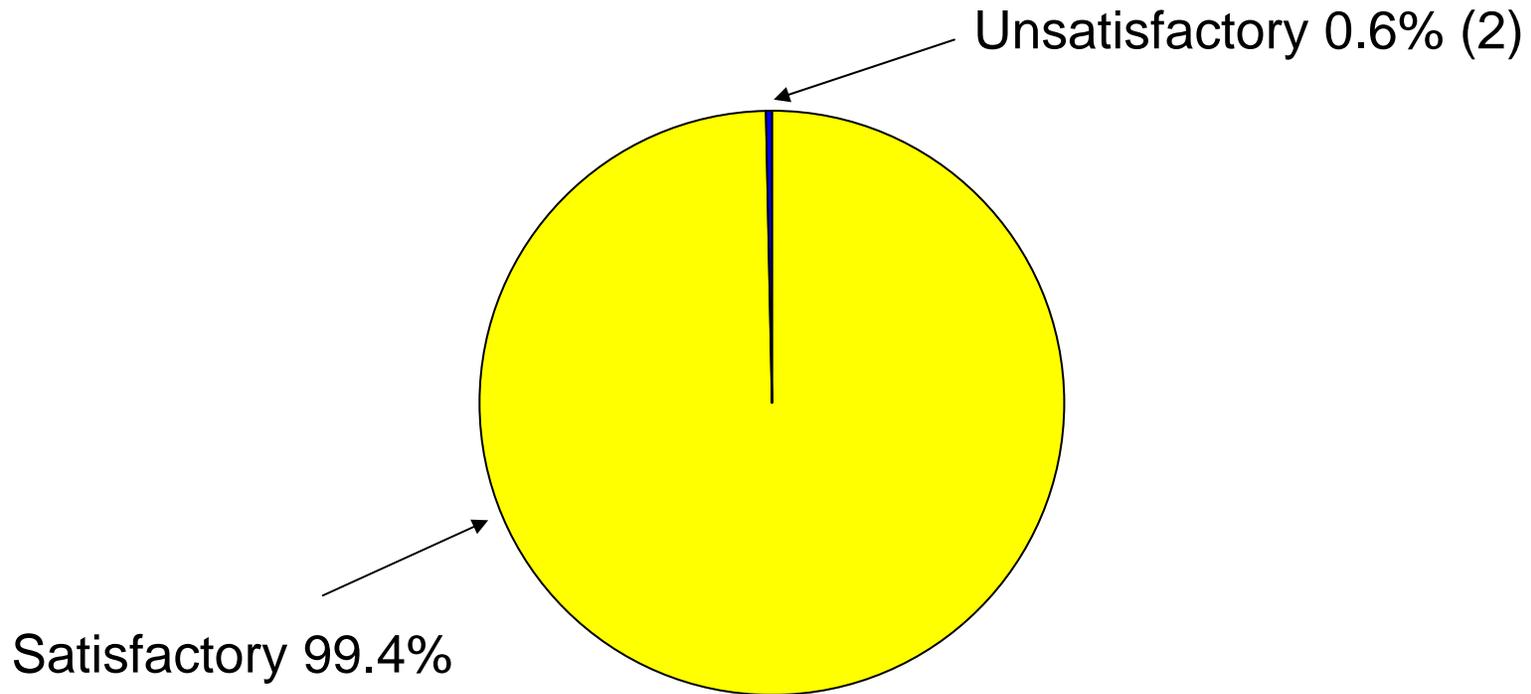
Types of analysis

- Microbiological testing (pathogens such as *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Staphylococcus aureus*)
- Chemical analysis (colouring matters, sweeteners and preservatives such as benzoic acid, sorbic acid, boric acid, parabens, salicylic acid and sulphur dioxide)



Overall results

- Only 2 of the 350 samples was unsatisfactory. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.4%.



Fish, meat and egg

- Samples include fish fillet, bacon, sausages, ham, steak, pork loin, pork steak, chicken fillet, scrambled eggs, boiled eggs, fried eggs and omelette.



Fish, meat and egg (Cont'd)

- Pathogens may be present in inadequately cooked fish products, meat products and eggs (e.g., sunny side up eggs). If cooked foods were improperly stored with raw meat/ fish or if utensils were shared among cooked and raw food, cross contamination may be resulted.
- Therefore, analysis of pathogens is one of the tests.
- The CFS also tested for the use of preservatives in frozen meat products.
- All samples tested for pathogens and preservatives are satisfactory.

Sandwiches, burgers and breads

- Samples include various kinds of commonly consumed sandwiches (e.g., tuna, ham, egg salad and tomato), hamburgers, fish-fillet burgers, sausage muffin burgers and local style breads (pineapple bun, cocktail bun, raisin bun, tuna fish bun, cream-filled bread with shredded coconut, sausage roll, etc.)



Sandwiches, burgers and breads (Cont'd)

- Preparation of sandwiches and burgers involves multiple manual handling steps. Some of their ingredients are usually prepared in advance. Poor personal hygiene and keeping ingredients under inappropriate temperature will facilitate bacterial growth.
- Testing include analysis of pathogens.
- 1 sample is unsatisfactory:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Tomato and eggs sandwich	<i>Bacillus cereus</i>	$3.4 \times 10^7 / \text{g}^{(1)}$

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

Vegetables, fruits and dairy products

- Samples include mushroom, baked beans, hash brown, salads, cut fruits, ready-to-eat vegetables, cheese and yogurt.
- Microbiological quality of cold dishes is of public concern. All samples were for testing of pathogens.
- All results are satisfactory.



Cereal products

- Samples include oatmeal, muesli, cereal bar, cornflakes, macaroni and instant noodles.
- Samples were for microbiological analysis. 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Instant noodles with mushroom and vegetables	<i>Salmonella</i>	Detected ⁽¹⁾

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



Spreads and others

- Samples include butter, margarine, jams, syrups, peanut butter, pie, tart, pancakes and waffles.
- The CFS has been notified of food poisoning outbreaks associated to pancakes previously. Therefore, the CFS conducted microbiological tests on this kind of products and their usual accompanying spreads.
- Laboratory tests also include use of sweeteners and preservatives in spreads.
- All samples are satisfactory.



Beverages

- Samples include milk, milk beverages, juice, coffee, tea, lemon tea and instant beverages.
- Drinks are usually included in Western and fast food style breakfast. All along, the public concern very much on the microbiological quality of drinks, especially the iced drinks.
- All samples are satisfactory.



Advice for trade

- The unsatisfactory samples involved pathogens in ready-to-eat food. The trade should always comply with hygienic practices which include:
 - ❑ maintain good personal hygiene
 - ❑ wash raw materials thoroughly
 - ❑ cook food thoroughly
 - ❑ separate raw food from ready-to-eat food to prevent cross contamination
 - ❑ keep food at safe temperatures (4°C or below; above 60 °C)

Advice for consumers

- Purchase from licensed and reliable food premises.
- Do not eat food which is undercooked or of abnormal texture, colour and taste.
- Maintain a balanced diet to minimize risk.