

# Food Safety Report for January 2010

Centre for Food Safety  
**Food and Environmental  
Hygiene Department**



**February 2010**

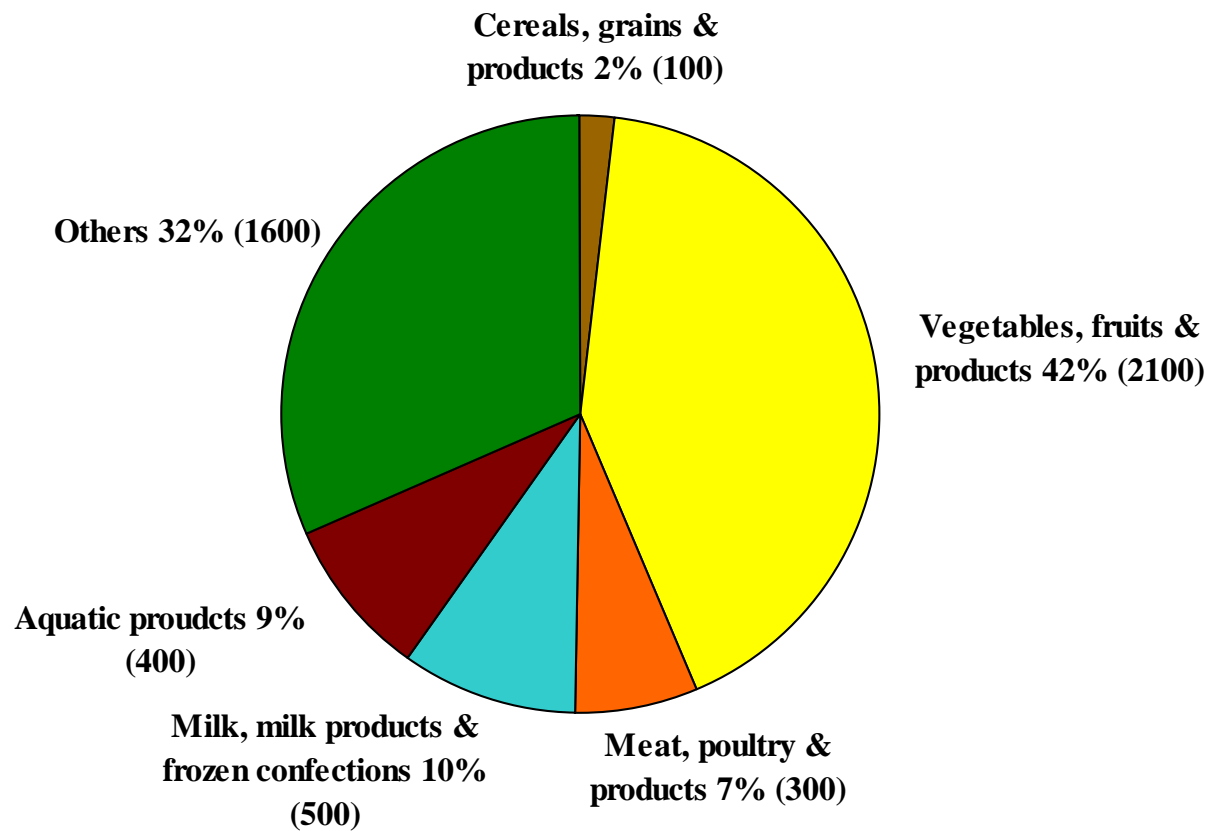
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# Introduction

- 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 chemical and microbiological tests.
- CFS releases the “Food Safety Report” every month so as to allow the public to obtain the latest food safety information more timely. In early February, CFS has also released the latest batch of results of a seasonal food surveillance on “Lunar New Year Food”.
- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample analyses that were completed in January 2010.

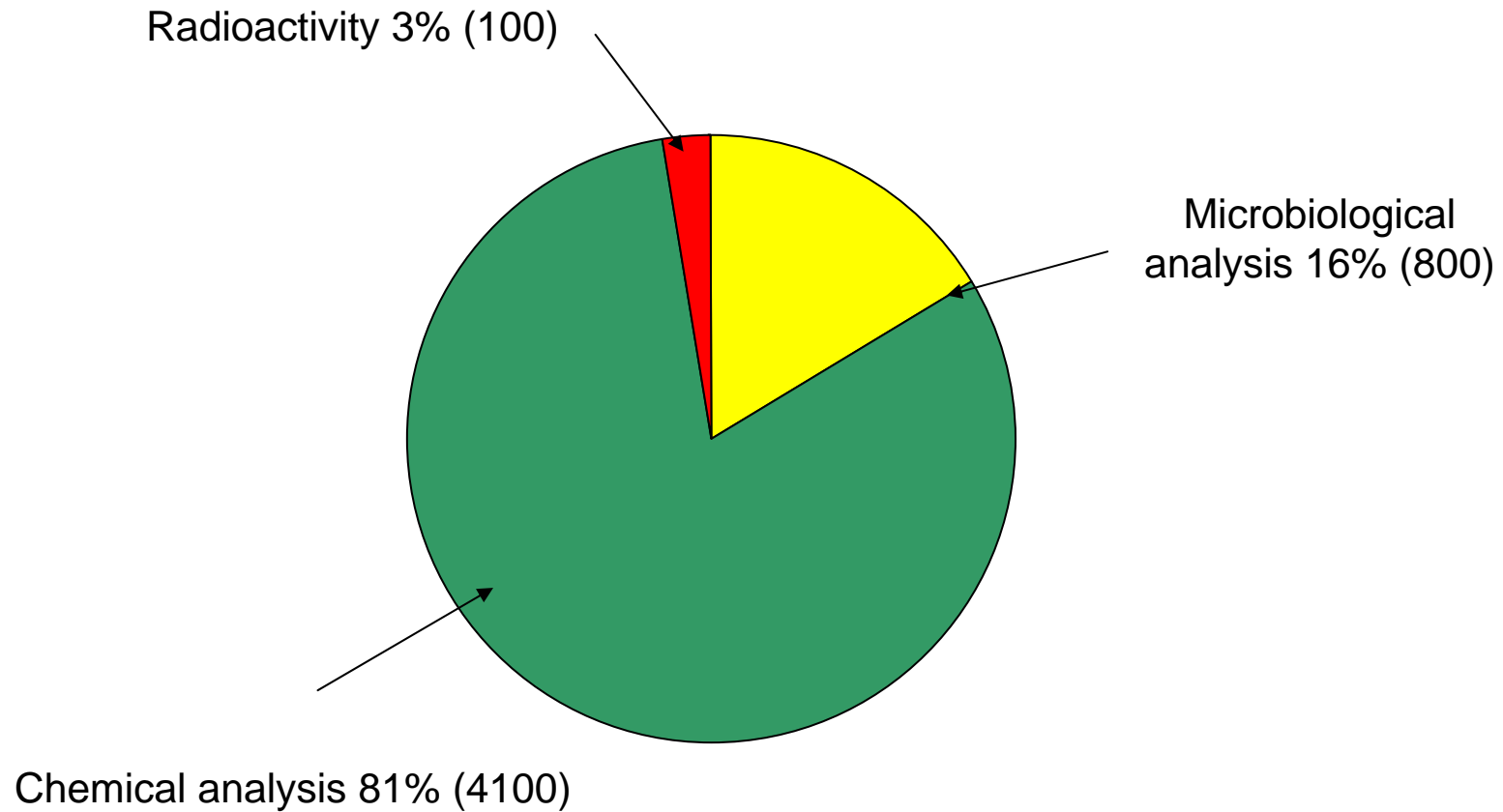
# Types of food tested

- About 5000 food samples of various food groups were tested.



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

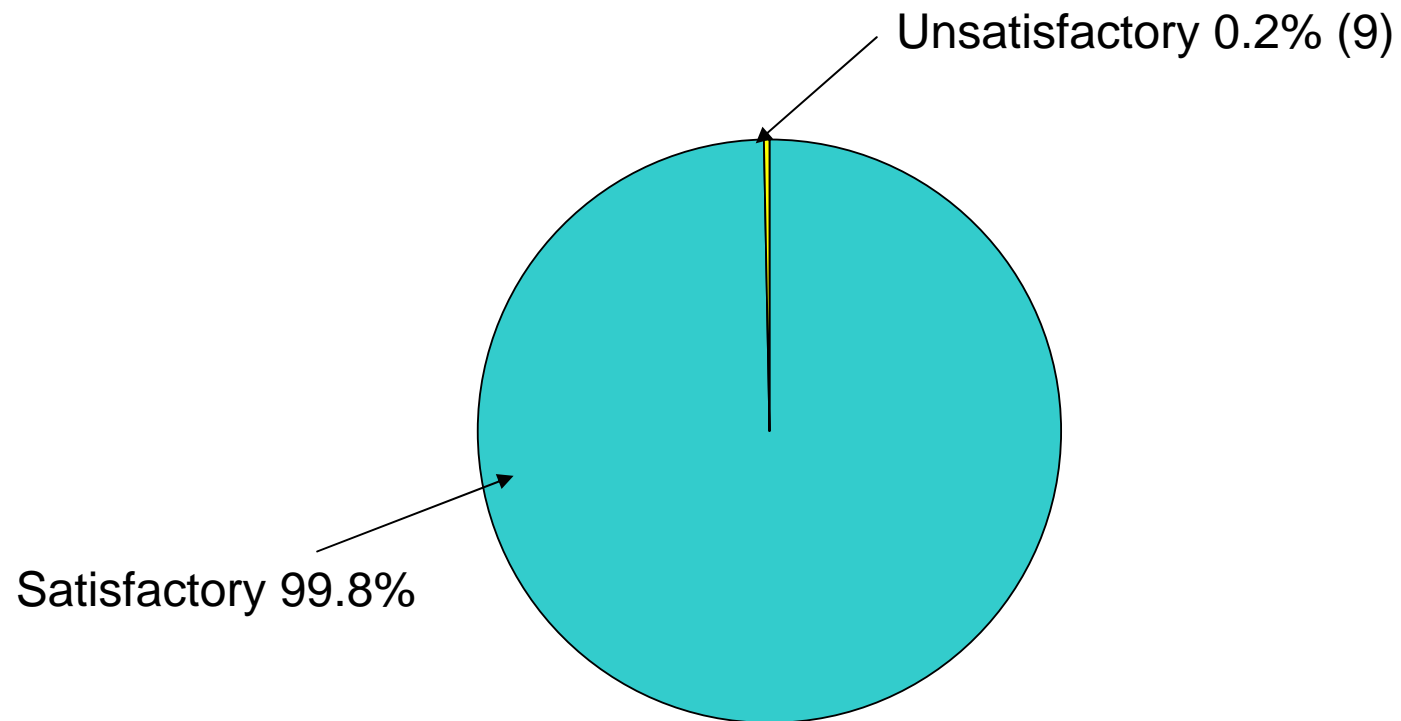
# Types of testing



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded

# Overall results

- Total 9 unsatisfactory samples. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.8%.



# Unsatisfactory samples

- 9 unsatisfactory food samples included 7 previously announced results. The remaining 2 unsatisfactory samples are as follows:

<b>Food Group</b>	<b><i>No. of Samples Tested</i></b>	<b><i>No. of Unsatisfactory Samples</i></b>
<b>Vegetables, fruits &amp; products</b>	2100	0
<b>Meat, poultry &amp; products</b>	300	1
<b>Aquatic products</b>	400	0
<b>Milk, milk products &amp; frozen confections</b>	500	0
<b>Cereal, grains and products</b>	100	0
<b>Others</b>	1600	1
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>5000</i></b>	<b><i>2</i></b>

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

# 1. Vegetables, fruits & products

- About 2100 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, etc.

- Analysis included:

- Microbiological tests

- Chemical tests such as:

- Pesticides (e.g., methamidophos, isocarbophos, DDT, HCH)
- Preservatives (included sulphur dioxide, sorbic acid and benzoic acid)
- Colouring matters
- Metallic contamination (e.g., cadmium, arsenic and lead)

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%. Except for the previously announced unsatisfactory samples of a preserved chili pepper and 2 bamboo fungus, all other samples were satisfactory.



## 2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 300 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, etc.
- Analysis included :
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, veterinary drug residues and colouring matters, etc)
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.4%, with 1unsatisfactory sample in this report.





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

### Preservatives

- There was 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Fresh beef	Sulphur dioxide	17 ppm <sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Sulphur dioxide is not permitted in fresh (including chilled and frozen) meat. On the other hand, it is permitted in foods such as pickled fruits and juices. It is of low toxicity and should not pose significant health effect on consumers. For individuals who are allergic to this preservative, there may be symptoms of breathing difficulty, headache and nausea. Since it is water soluble, most of it can be removed through washing and cooking.

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

### **Colouring matters**

- Except for the previously announced unsatisfactory sample of preserved Chinese sausage, all samples tested for colouring matters were satisfactory.

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

### **Other tests**

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

### 3. Aquatic products

- About 400 samples were collected. They generally cover fish, shellfish, shrimp/prawn, crab, squid and their products.
- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. veterinary drug residues, biotoxins, metallic contamination and preservatives)
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.5%. Except for the previously announced unsatisfactory samples of a half-shell scallop and a dried fish maw, all other samples were satisfactory.



## 4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 500 samples were tested. They included ice-cream, cheese, milk and milk products, etc.
- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests (total bacterial count, pathogens, e.g., *Salmonella* and *Staphylococcus aureus*)
  - Chemical tests (melamine, colouring matters, sweeteners)
- All samples were satisfactory.



## 5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 100 samples including rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal, etc.
- Analysis included microbiological and chemical tests such as:
  - metallic contamination
  - preservatives
  - colouring matters
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.0%. Except for the previously announced unsatisfactory sample of New Year pudding, all other samples were satisfactory.



## 6. Other food commodities

- About 1600 samples were collected. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.
- Types of food included:

Mixed dishes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Pathogens, colouring matters &amp; preservatives</li> </ul>	Condiments and sauces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Colouring matters &amp; preservatives</li> </ul>
Dim Sum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Pathogens, preservatives &amp; colouring matters</li> </ul>	Snacks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Metallic contamination &amp; preservatives</li> </ul>
Beverages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Preservatives, colouring matters &amp; sweeteners</li> </ul>	Eggs and egg products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Melamine &amp; colouring matters</li> </ul>
Sushi and sashimi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Microbiological examination</li> </ul>	Others
Sugar and sweets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Preservatives, sweeteners &amp; melamine</li> </ul>	

## 6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

### Microbiological analysis

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Tuna tartare	<i>Salmonella</i> (pathogen)	Detected <sup>(1)</sup>

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

### Chemical analysis

- All samples were satisfactory.



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# Follow-up actions

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

# Advices to trade and consumers

- The food trade should comply with the legal requirements and follow “good manufacturing practice” (GMP). They should use permitted food additives only in an appropriate manner.
- According to law, selling fresh, chilled or frozen meat containing preservatives is an offence and the maximum penalty is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment. The Food and Environmental Health Department (FEHD) will register demerit points against the concerned fresh provision shop according to the established mechanism. For repeated offenders, suspension or cancellation of licence will be imposed. For public market stalls, tenancy may be terminated.
- The trade should always follow the “5 Keys to Food Safety” to minimize the risk of foodborne diseases.
- The consumers should patronize licensed restaurants and reliable retailers. They should maintain balanced diet to reduce food risk.