

Food Safety Report for March 2010

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department



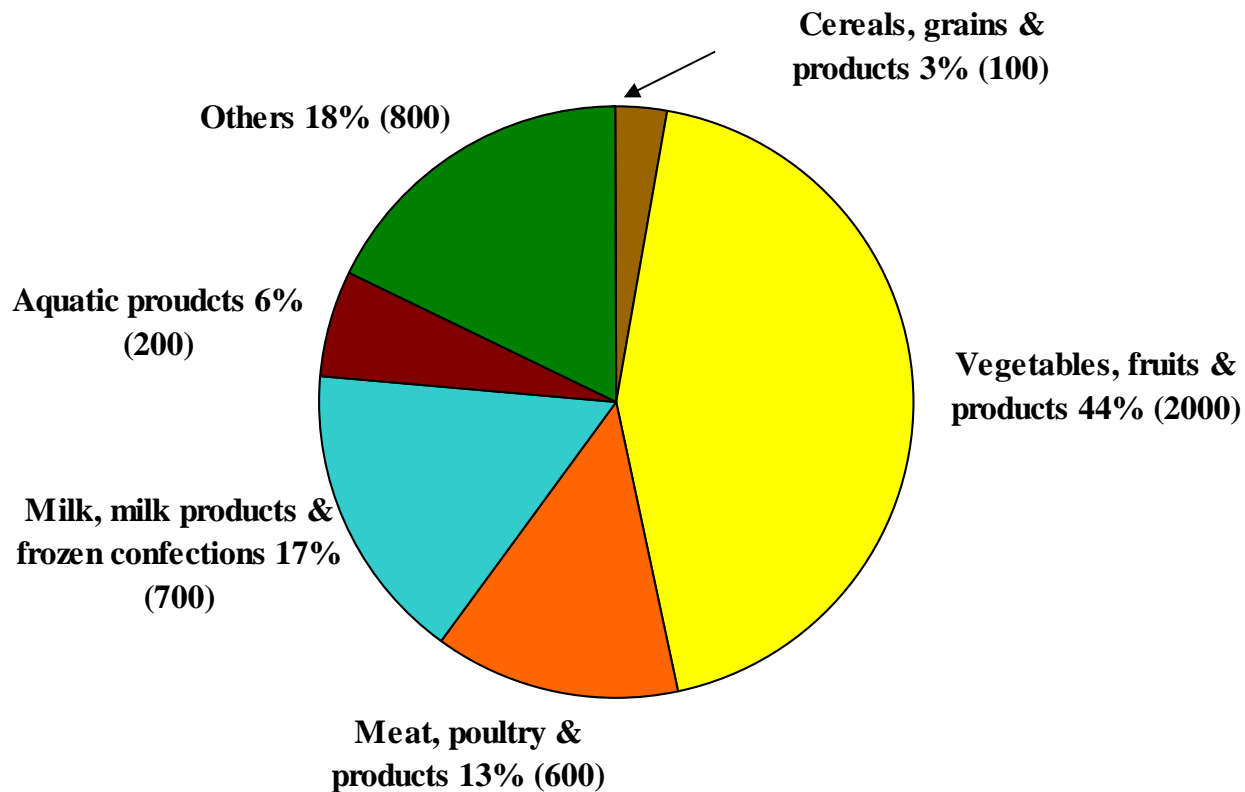
April 2010

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. Besides, CFS has also released the results of a targeted food surveillance project on “Sulphur dioxide in meat” recently.
- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample analyses that were completed in March 2010.

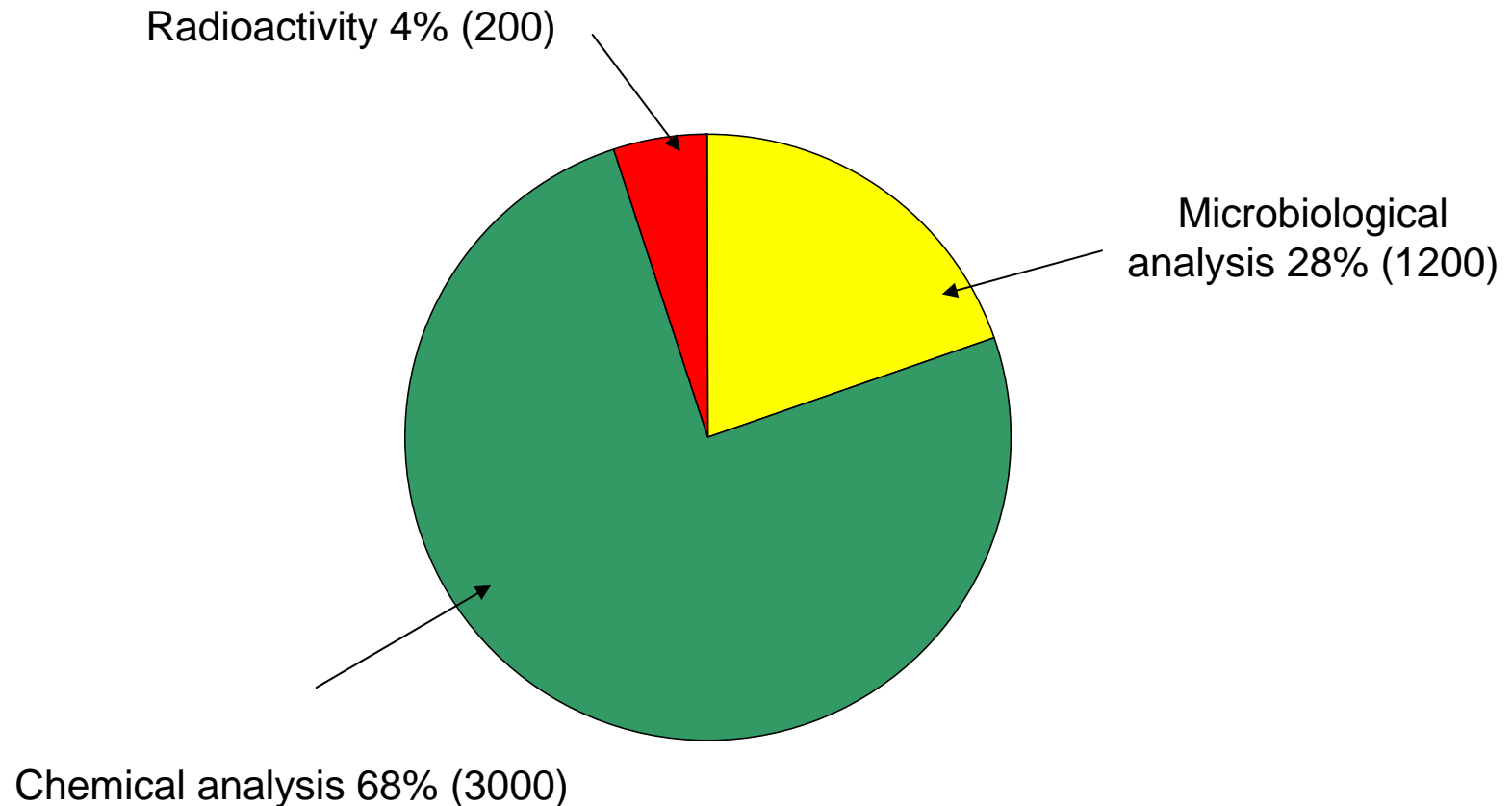
Types of food tested

- About 4400 food samples of various food groups were tested.



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

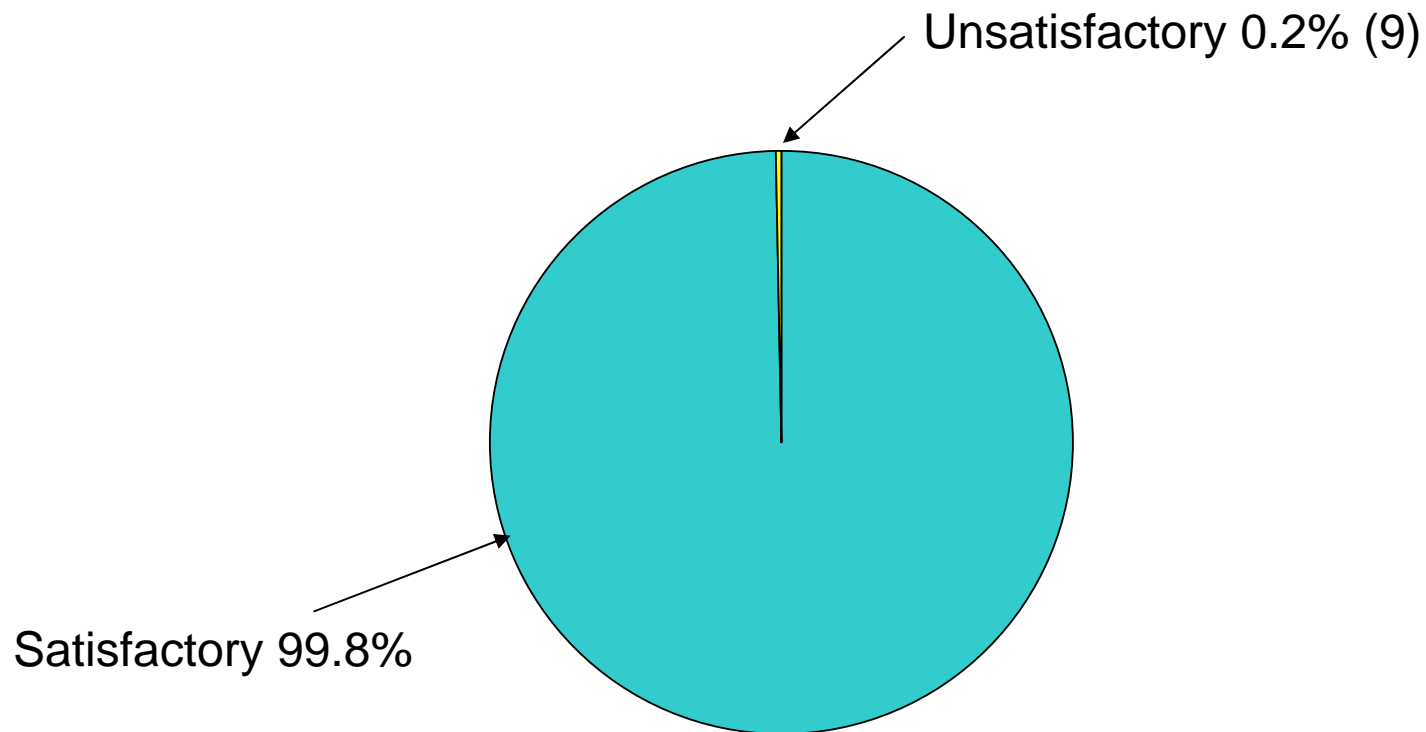
Types of testing



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 4 previously announced results. The remaining 5 unsatisfactory samples are as follows:

Food Group	No. of Samples Tested	No. of Unsatisfactory Samples
Vegetables, fruits & products	2000	0
Meat, poultry & products	600	1
Aquatic products	200	1
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	700	1
Cereal, grains & products	100	0
Others	800	2
Total	4400	5

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 (included methamidophos, isocarbophos, DDT and HCH)
 - Preservatives (included sulphur dioxide, sorbic acid and benzoic acid)
 - Colouring matters
- All samples were satisfactory.



2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 600 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)
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.1%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



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

Preservatives and Veterinary drug residues

- Except for the 4 previously announced meat samples found to contain sulphur dioxide, there was another unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Frozen suckling pig	Chlortetracycline	0.26 ppm ⁽¹⁾

(1) The level exceeds the legal limit. However, based on the detected level, it is unlikely to pose adverse effect on consumers upon normal consumption.

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

Other tests

- The remaining samples for other tests (e.g. pathogens and colouring matters) were satisfactory.

3. Aquatic products

- About 200 samples were collected. They generally covered 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 99.6%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Pathogens

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Raw oyster	Norovirus nucleic acid	Detected ⁽¹⁾

(1) Norovirus may cause vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and fever.

3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Other tests

- The remaining samples for other tests (e.g. veterinary drug residues, biotoxins, metallic contamination and preservatives) 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, colouring matters and sweeteners)
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



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

Microbiological tests

- All samples were satisfactory for pathogens.
- 1 sample was unsatisfactory for hygienic indicator:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Chocolate milk beverage	Colony count	>10 ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Colony count is a hygienic indicator. The detected quantity exceeded the legal limit. The affected batch of products were marked and sealed by CFS. None of them have entered into the local market.

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

Other tests

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

5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 100 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.
- Analysis included:
 - Microbiological tests
 - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, colouring matters and sweeteners)
- All samples were satisfactory.



6. Other food commodities

- About 800 food samples were collected. Types included:

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

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.7%, with 2 unsatisfactory samples in this report.

6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

Microbiological tests

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Hakka dumpling	<i>Bacillus cereus</i> (Pathogen)	2.5 x 10 ⁶ /g ⁽¹⁾

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

6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

Chemical tests

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Coconut cake	Sorbic acid	1700ppm ⁽¹⁾

- (1) The level exceeded the legal limit. However, sorbic acid is of low toxicity and based on the detected level, it is unlikely to pose significant adverse effect on consumers upon normal consumption.

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.

Advice for trade

- 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.
- For those samples detected with pathogens, they indicated that the food processing was unhygienic. The food 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

Advice for consumers

- The consumers should patronize reliable premises for buying food. They should maintain balanced diet to minimize food risk.
- Marine bivalves are high risk food that contain norovirus. Consumers should choose eating thoroughly cooked seafood to avoid food poisoning.