Food Safety Report for June 2010

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

July 2010

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Introduction

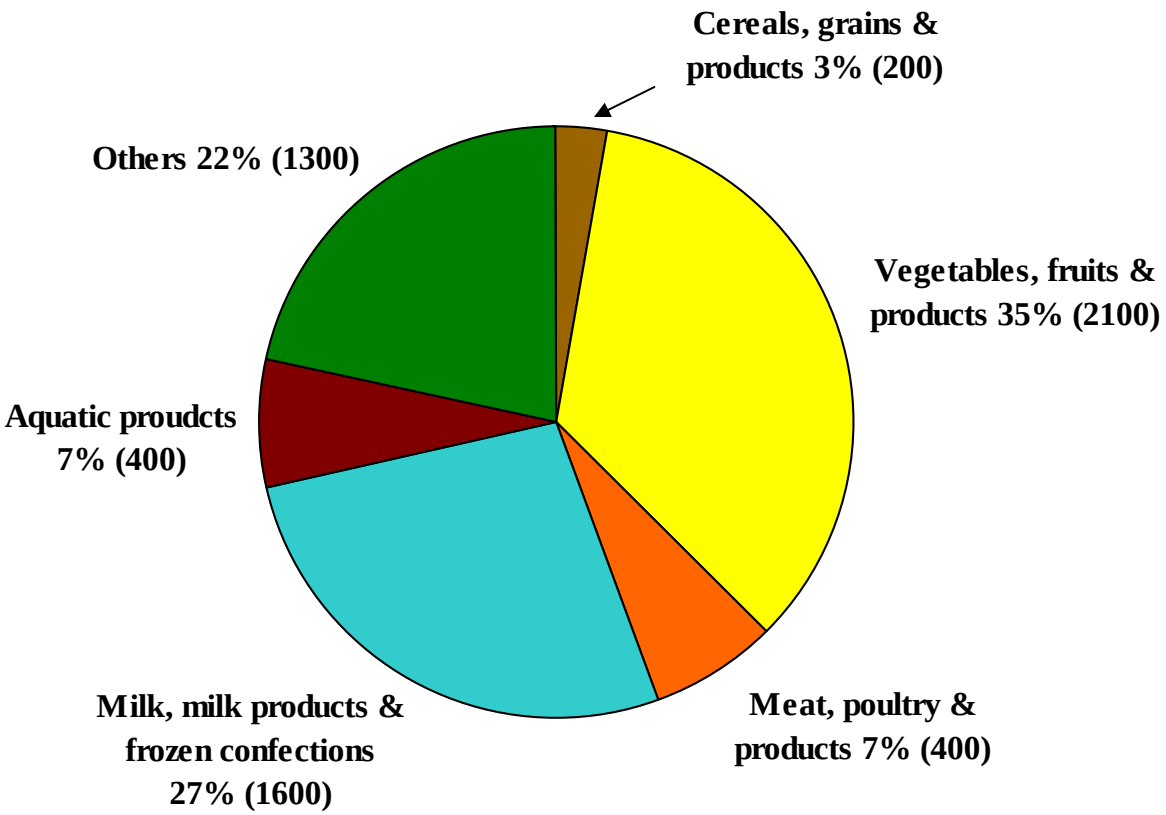
- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) adopts the three-tier food surveillance approach, i.e. routine food surveillance, targeted food surveillance and seasonal food surveillance to collect samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for chemical and microbiological tests.

- The CFS releases the "Food Safety Report" every month so as to allow the public to obtain the latest food safety information more timely. Besides, the CFS has released the results of the following two Targeted Food Surveillance projects recently:
  - "Microbiological quality of ice-cream and frozen confections"
  - "*Enterobacter Sakazakii* in Powdered Infant Formula"

- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample analyses that were completed in June 2010.

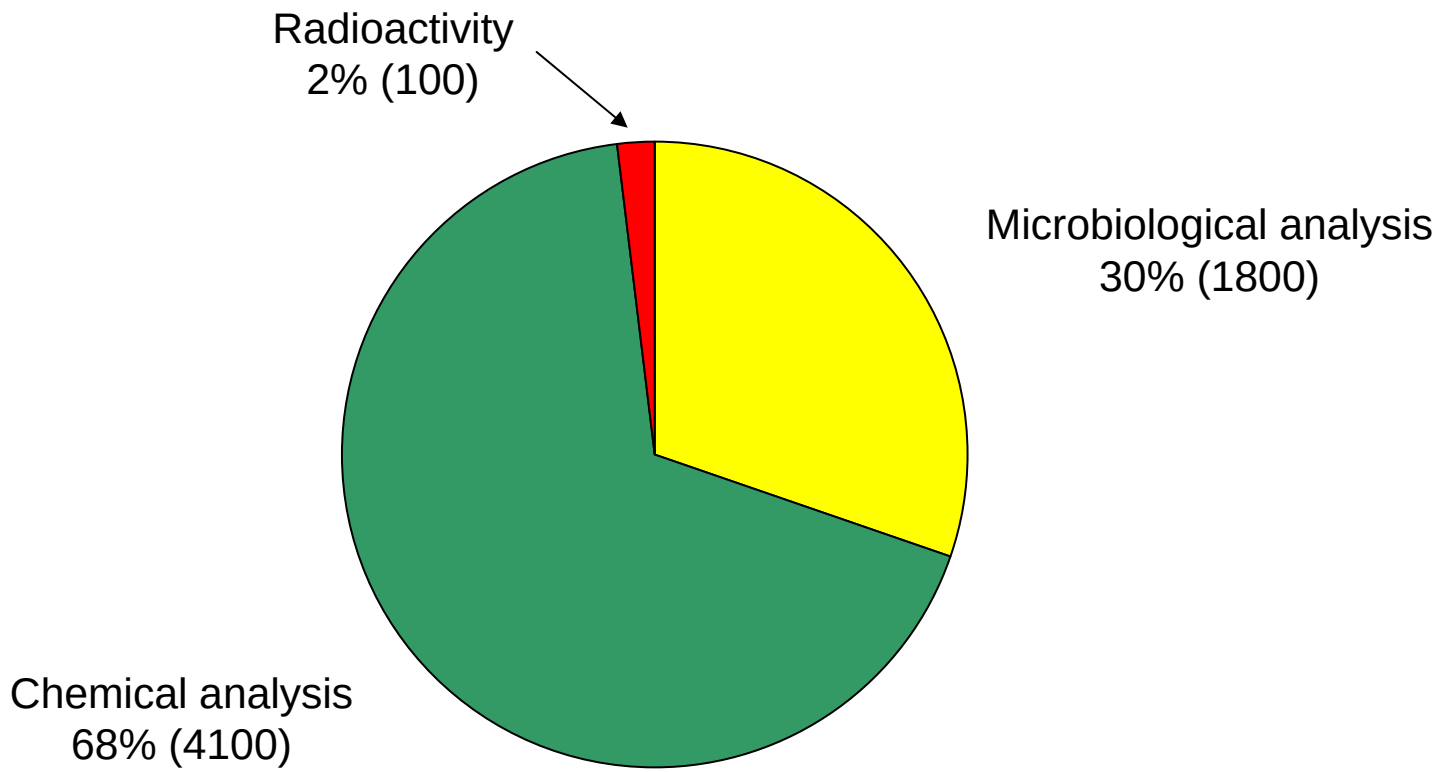
Types of food tested

- About 6100 food samples of various food groups were tested.



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

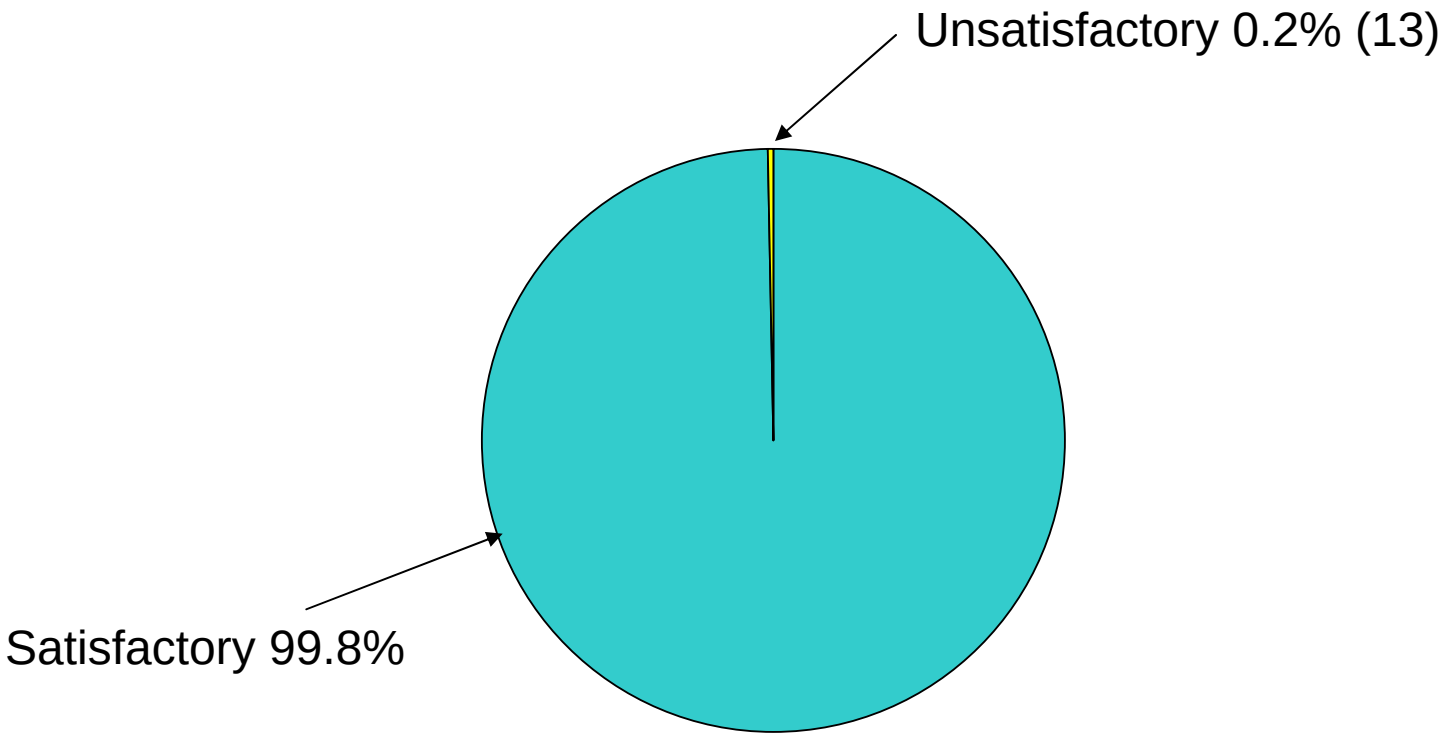
Types of testing



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded

Overall results

- Total 13 unsatisfactory samples. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.8%.



Unsatisfactory samples

- 13 unsatisfactory food samples included 4 previously announced results. The remaining 9 unsatisfactory samples are as follows:

Food Group	*No. of Samples Tested*	*No. of Unsatisfactory Samples*
Vegetables, fruits & products	2100	0
Meat, poultry & products	400	2
Aquatic products	400	4
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	1600	0
Cereal, grains & products	200	0
Others	1300	3
Total	***6100***	***9***

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.



- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests such as:
    - Pesticides (included methamidophos and isocarbophos)
    - Colouring matters
    - Metallic contamination

- All samples 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)

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.5%, with 2 unsatisfactory samples in this report.





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

Preservatives

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Fresh beef	Sulphur dioxide	1800 ppm (1)

(1) 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 will not cause adverse health effects. 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.

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

Pathogens

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Chicken with chili	*Salmonella*	Detected (1)

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

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

Other tests

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

3. Aquatic products

- About 400 samples were collected. They generally covered fish, shellfish, shrimp/prawn, crab, squid and their products.

- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, colouring matters, metallic contamination, biotoxins and veterinary drug residues)

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.0%, with 4 unsatisfactory samples in this report.




3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Metallic contamination

- 2 unsatisfactory samples:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Chilled swordfish	Mercury	1.02 ppm(1)
Frozen black cod (fish)	Mercury	0.75 ppm(1)

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

3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Veterinary drug residues

- 2 unsatisfactory samples:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Chilled grey mullet (Fish)	Malachite green	0.0025 ppm(1)
Edible goldfish	Malachite green	0.04 ppm(1)

(1) Not permitted in food, but the detected levels were unlikely to pose adverse health effects upon normal consumption.

3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Other tests

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

4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 1600 samples were tested. They included ice-cream, cheese, milk and milk products.

- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests (total bacterial count and pathogens)
  - Chemical tests (e.g. melamine, colouring matters and sweeteners)

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.8%. Except for the previously announced 4 samples of soft ice-cream and ice-cream scoop, all samples were satisfactory.




5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 200 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.
- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, sweeteners, colouring matters and metallic contamination)
- All samples were satisfactory.




6. Other food commodities

- About 1300 food samples were collected. Types included:

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

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.8%, with 3 unsatisfactory samples in this report.

6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

Pathogens

- 3 unsatisfactory samples:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Manga Swiss roll	*Salmonella*	Detected (1)
Mango pudding mousse cake	*Salmonella*	Detected (1)
Coconut pudding	*Bacillus cereus*	4.9×10^5/g (1)

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

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 to trade

- Summer is the peak season of food poisoning. 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
- 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.
- The trade should establish and practise food safety control plans such as HACCP for bakery manufacturing.
- According to legislation, no one shall sell, for human consumption, any food which contains malachite green. The trade should source aquatic products from reliable suppliers.

Advice to consumers

- Should patronize reliable premises for buying food.
- Should maintain balanced diet to minimize food risk.
- Pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and young children are the susceptible groups being affected by mercury. When choosing food, they should avoid eating large predatory fish.