Food Safety Report for May 2011

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

June 2011

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Introduction

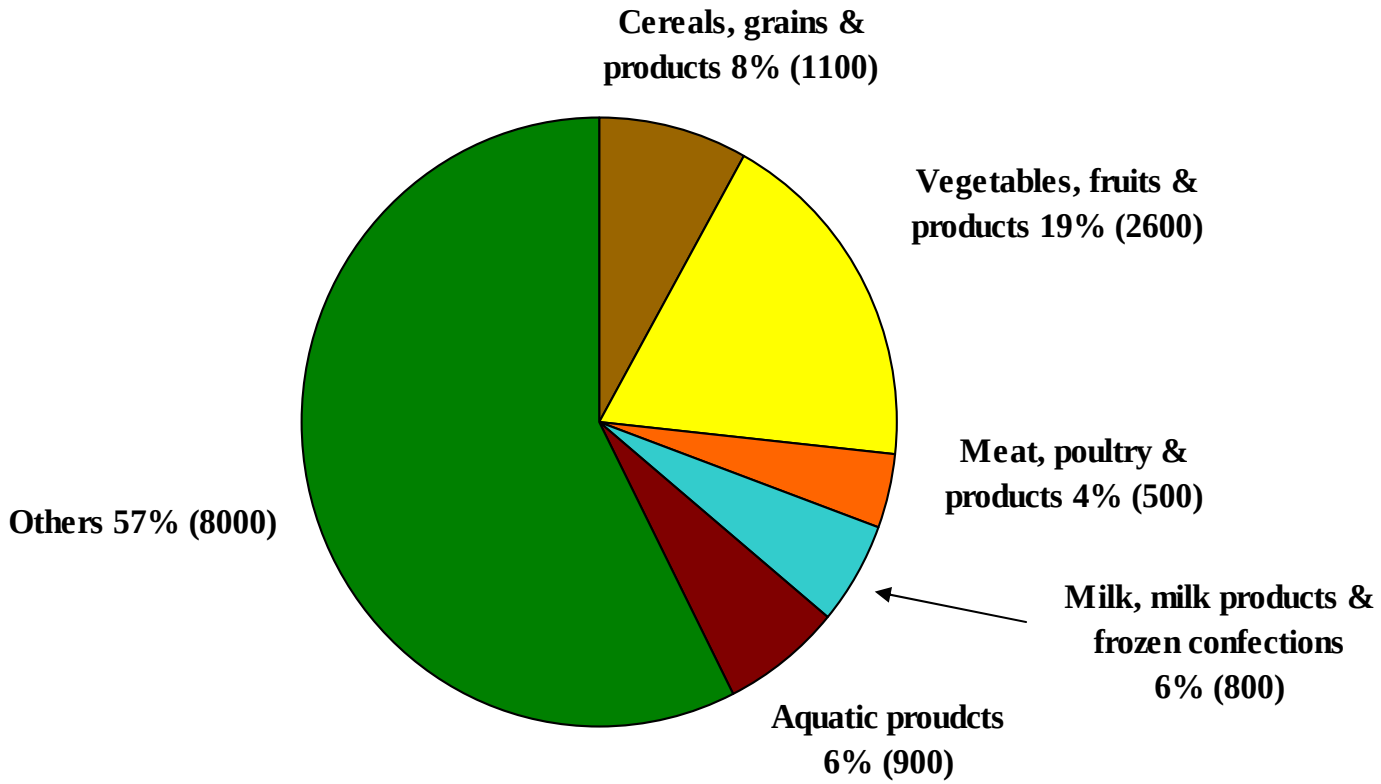
- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) adopts the three-tier food surveillance approach, i.e. routine food surveillance, targeted food surveillance and seasonal food surveillance to collect samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for microbiological, chemical and radiological tests.

- The CFS releases the "Food Safety Report" every month so as to allow the public to obtain the latest food safety information timely. Besides, the CFS has released the results of the following 3 food surveillance projects recently:
  - "Vegetarian food"
  - "Microbiological quality of lunch boxes"
  - "Microbiological quality of prepackaged food that required reheating before consumption"

- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample result analyses in May 2011.

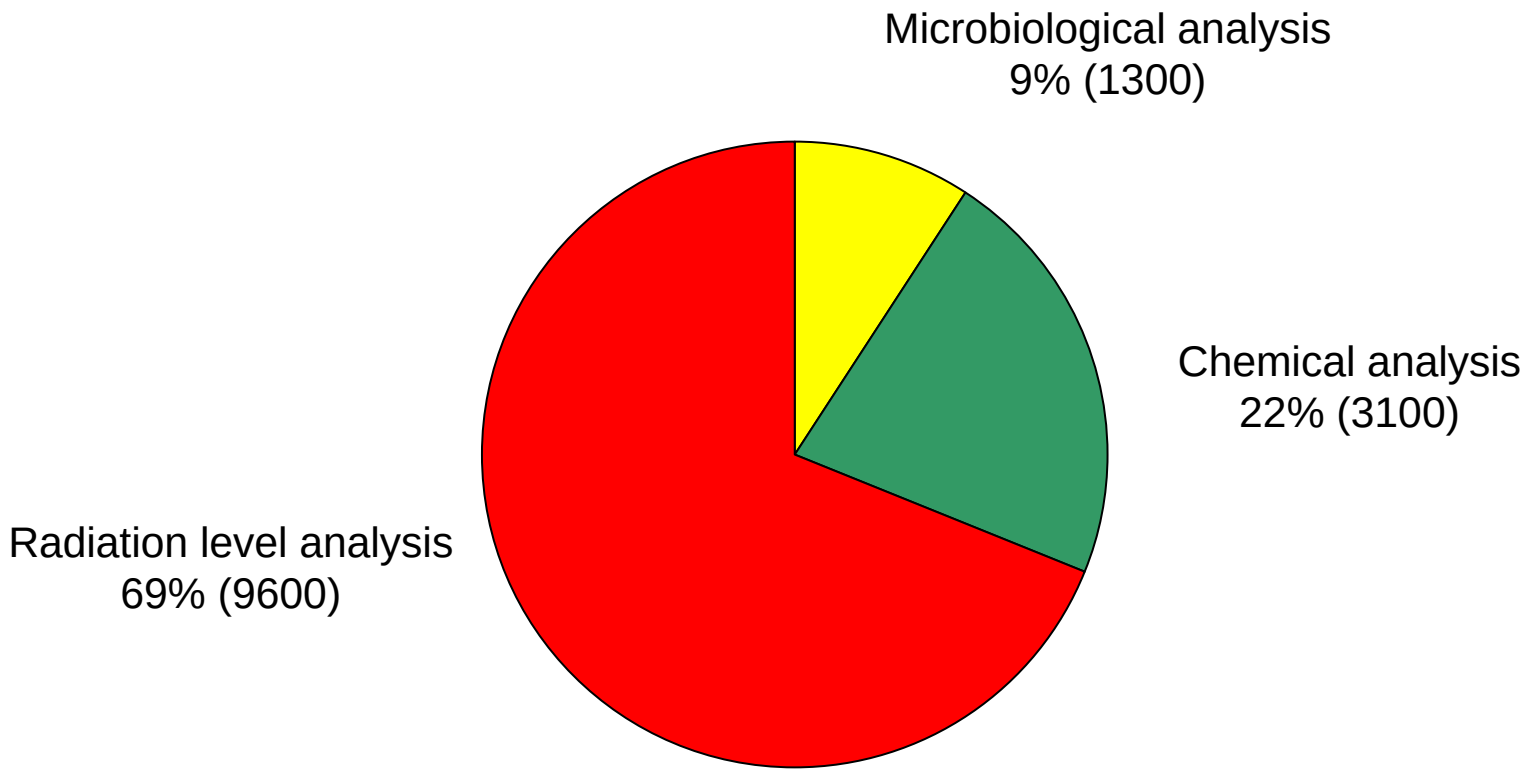
Types of food tested

- About 14000 food samples of various food groups were tested.



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

Types of testing

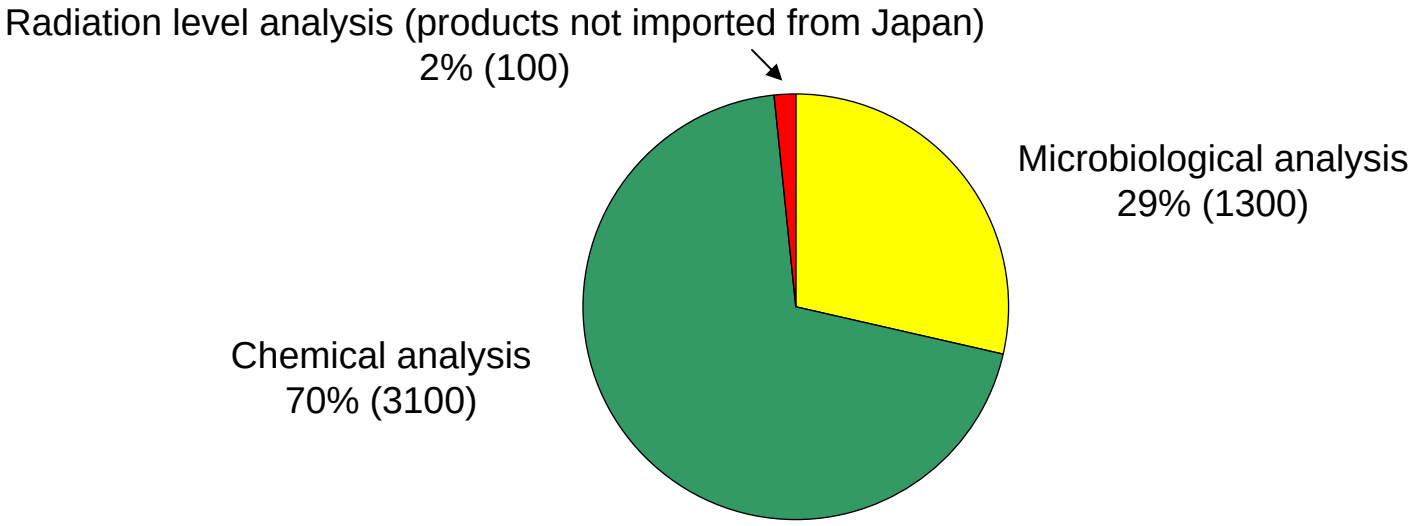


N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded

Types of testing (Cont'd)

- In view of an incident involving a nuclear power plant in Japan after an earthquake, the CFS has stepped up surveillance of fresh produce imported from Japan for examination of radiation level from mid March. In May, all the radiation level test results of about 9500 samples were satisfactory.

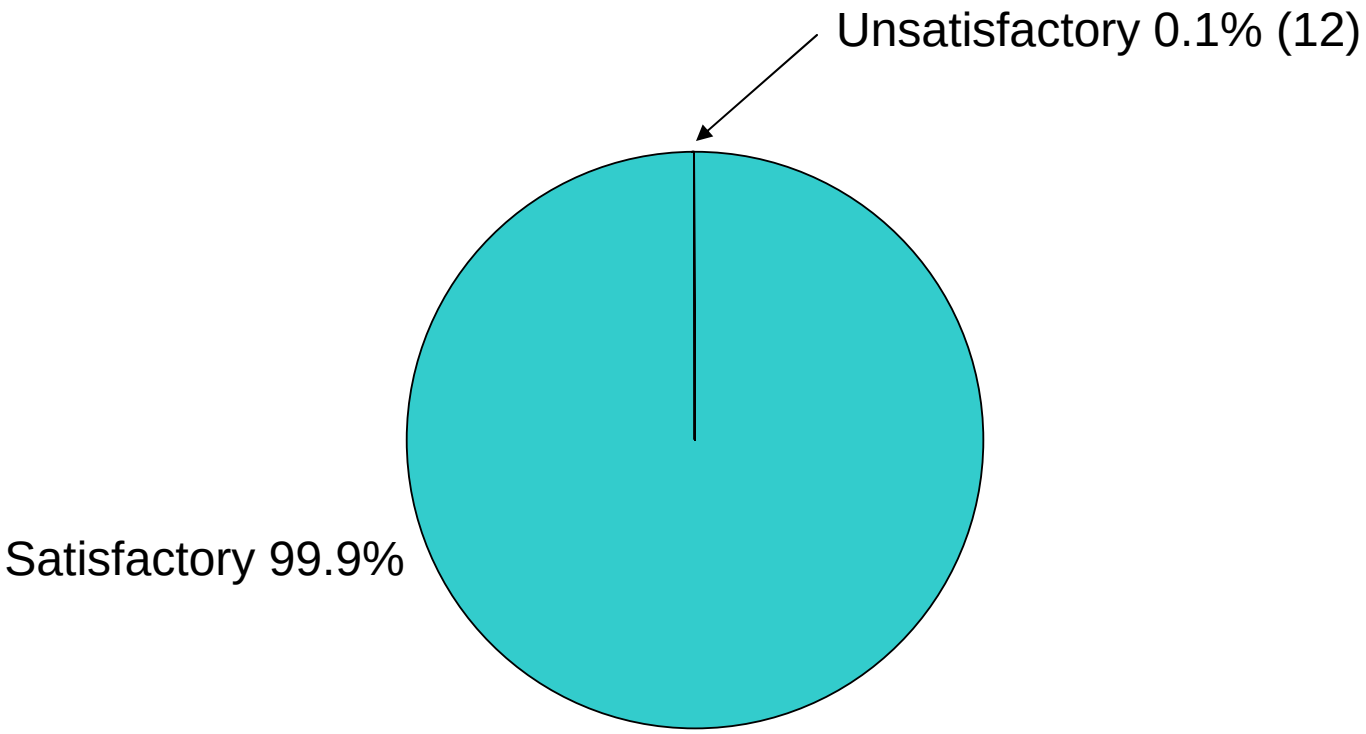
- Except that, types of testing for the remaining food surveillance samples are distributed as follows:



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded

Overall results

- There were 12 unsatisfactory samples in total. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%.



Unsatisfactory samples

- 12 unsatisfactory food samples included 6 previously announced results. The remaining 6 unsatisfactory samples are as follows:

Food Group	*No. of Samples Tested*	*No. of Unsatisfactory Samples*
Vegetables, fruits & products	2600	0
Meat, poultry & products	500	1
Aquatic products	900	1
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	800	2
Cereal, grains & products	1100	0
Others	8000	2
Total	***14000***	***6***

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

1. Vegetables, fruits & products

- About 2600 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
  - Radiation level tests

- All samples were satisfactory.

2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 500 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 and veterinary drug residues)
  - Radiation level tests

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.8%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.





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

Veterinary drug residues

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Frozen suckling pig	Sulfonamides	3.1 ppm (1)

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

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

Other tests

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

3. Aquatic products

- About 900 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, biotoxins and veterinary drug residues)
  - Radiation level tests

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.




3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Veterinary drug residues

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Dried fish	Chloramphenicol	0.0153 ppm(1)

(1) Not permitted in food. However, normal consumption of the product with the detected level was unlikely to pose adverse health effects.

3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Other tests

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

4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 800 samples were tested. They included ice-cream, cheese, milk and milk products.

- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests (total bacterial count and pathogens , e.g. *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes*)
  - Chemical tests (e.g. melamine, preservatives, colouring matters, sweeteners and veterinary drug residues)
  - Radiation level tests

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




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

Microbiological examination

- 2 unsatisfactory samples:

Samples	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
2 flavours of ice-cream scoop (vanilla and green tea)	Coliform organisms	150 and 1900/g (1)

(1) Coliform organism is hygienic indicator. The detected levels exceeded the legal limit.

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

Other tests

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

5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 1100 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.
- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination)
  - Radiation level tests
- All samples were satisfactory.




6. Other food commodities

- About 8000 food samples were collected. Types included:

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

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%. Except for the previously announced 6 unsatisfactory sports drink samples [containing a plasticiser, di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP)], there were 2 unsatisfactory samples in this report.

6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

Chemical analysis

- 2 unsatisfactory samples:

Samples	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
2 Peanut samples	Aflatoxin	0.055 and 0.56 ppm (1)

(1) Although there is a concern of the carcinogenic potential of aflatoxin, immediate health risk upon normal consumption at the levels detected is unlikely.

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 the trade and consumers

- The traders should comply with the legal requirements and follow Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). They should use permitted food additives only in an appropriate manner.
- Retailers should source food from reliable suppliers. Maintain a good recording system to allow source tracing if needed.
- Retailers should observe good hygienic practices during all preparation and handling processes (including personal hygiene of food handlers). Keep both hands clean. They should clean and sanitize all relevant equipment and utensils each day.
- Consumers should patronize reliable premises for buying food. They should also maintain balanced diet to minimize food risk.