

Food Safety Report for January 2012

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department



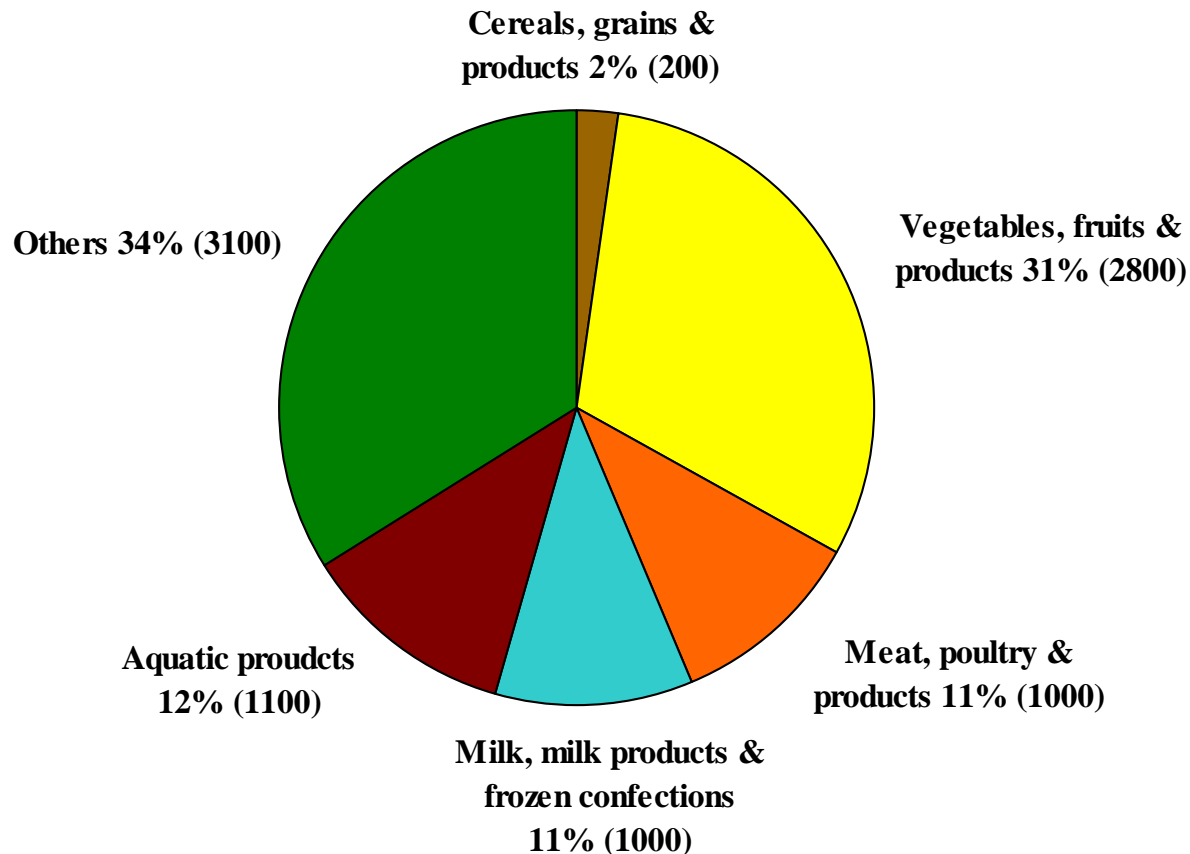
February 2012

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.
- CFS releases the “Food Safety Report” every month so as to allow the public to obtain the latest food safety information timely.
- This presentation gives an account of the food surveillance sample result analyses in January 2012.

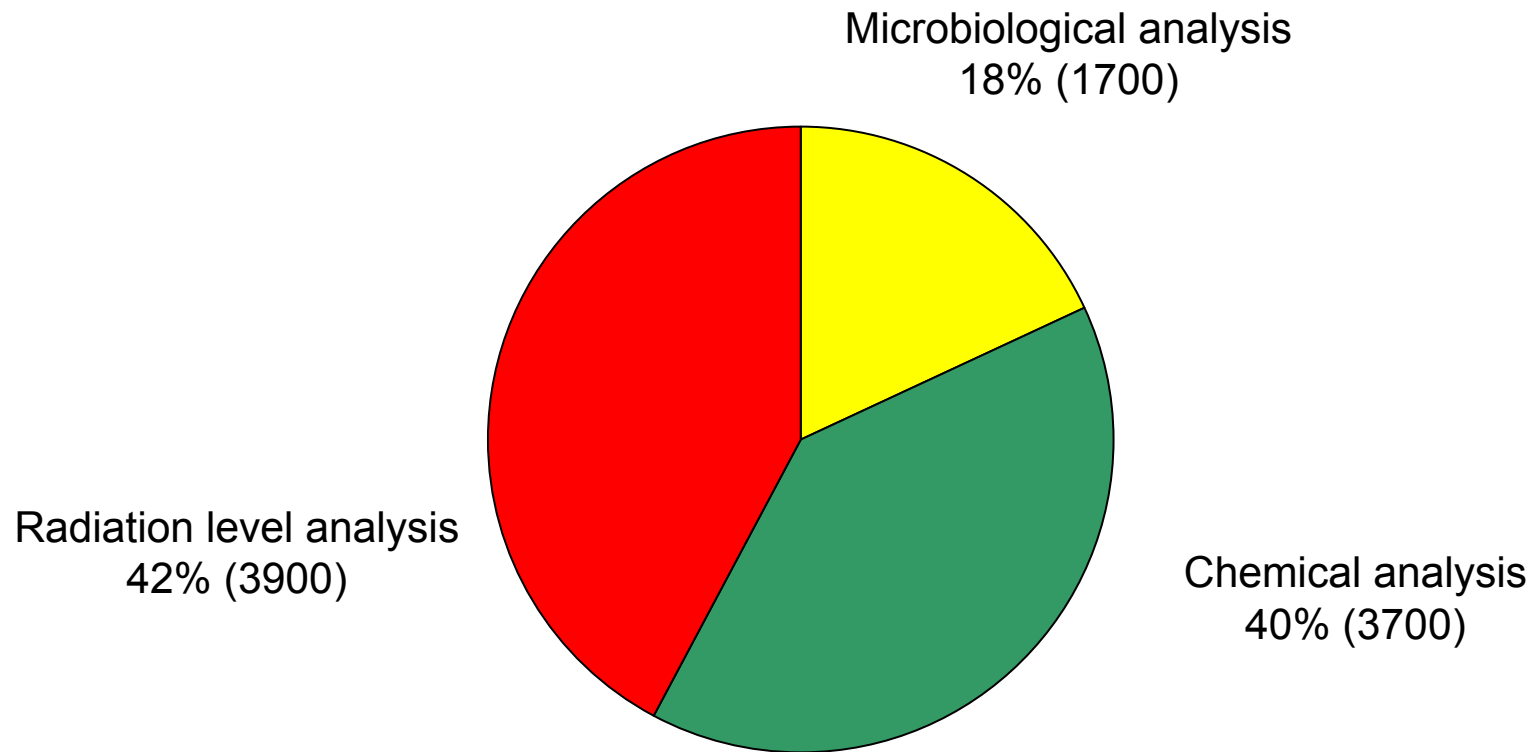
Types of food tested

- About 9200 food samples of various food groups were tested.



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded and may not add up to total due to rounding.

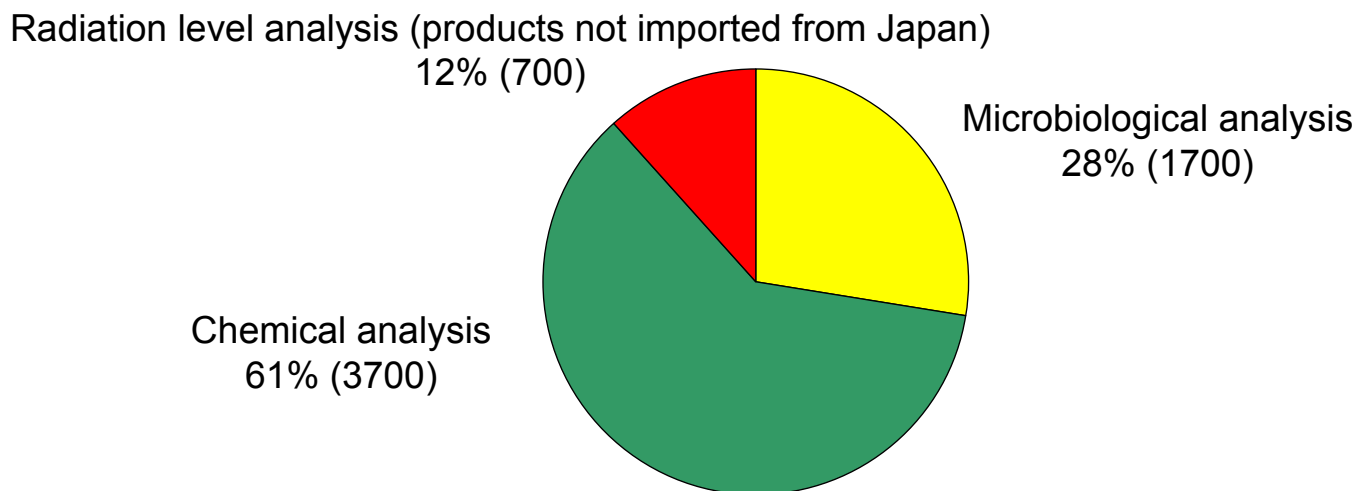
Types of testing



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded and may not add up to total due to rounding.

Types of testing (Cont'd)

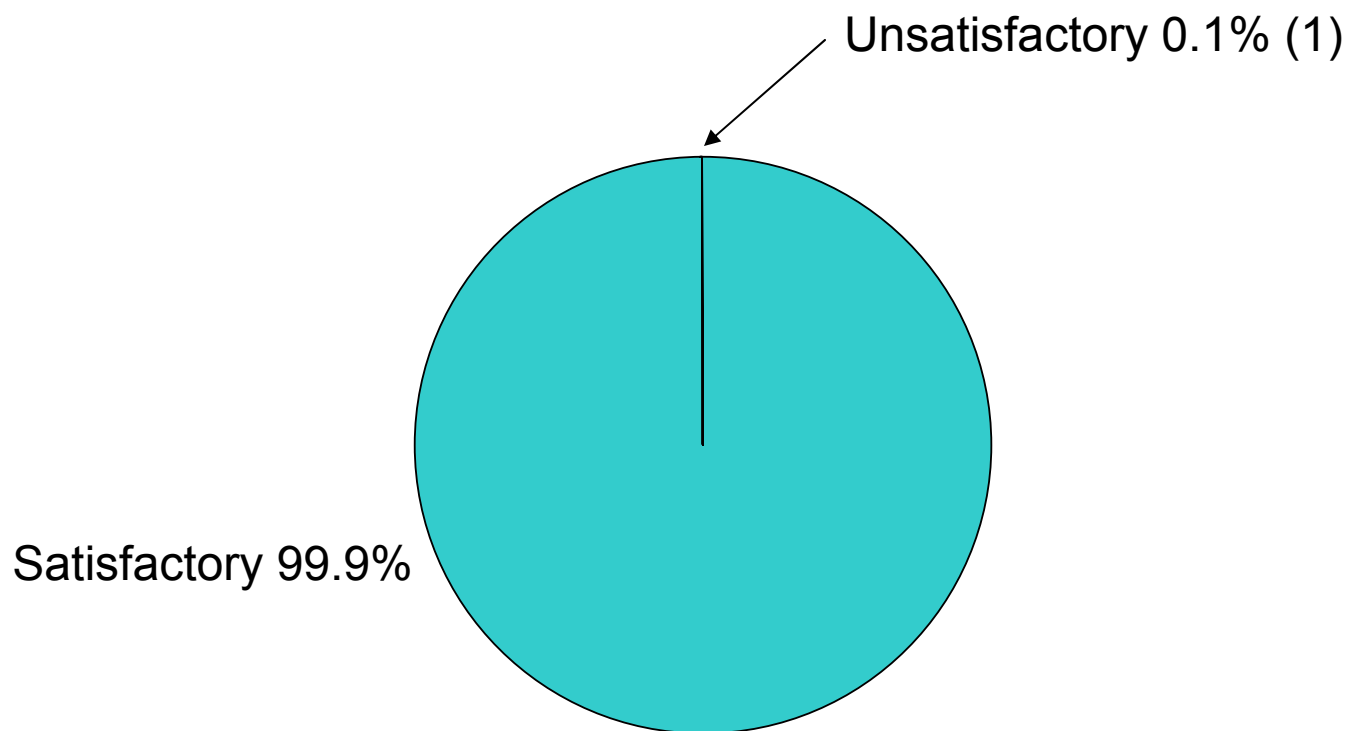
- In response to the Fukushima nuclear power plant incident in Japan, CFS has stepped up surveillance of imported Japanese food for testing of radiation level from mid-March 2011. In January 2012, all the radiation level test results of about 3200 samples were satisfactory.
- Except that, types of testing for the remaining food surveillance samples are distributed as follows:



N.B.: Figures in brackets are rounded and may not add up to total due to rounding.

Overall results

- There was only 1 unsatisfactory sample. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%.



Unsatisfactory samples

- The unsatisfactory food sample was as follows:

Food Group	<i>No. of Samples Tested</i>	<i>No. of Unsatisfactory Samples</i>
Vegetables, fruits & products	2800	0
Meat, poultry & products	1000	0
Aquatic products	1100	1
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	1000	0
Cereal, grains & products	200	0
Others	3100	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>9200</i>	<i>1</i>

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

1. Vegetables, fruits & products

- About 2800 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)
 - Preservatives
 - Metallic contamination
 - Colouring matters
 - Radiation level tests
- All samples were satisfactory.



2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 1000 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)
 - Radiation level tests
- All samples were satisfactory.



3. Aquatic products

- About 1100 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, veterinary drug residues and colouring matters)
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Metallic contamination

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Frozen fish fillet	Mercury	1.27 ppm ⁽¹⁾

- ⁽¹⁾ The detected level exceeded the legal limit (0.5 ppm). 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)

Other tests

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

4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 1000 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, preservatives, veterinary drug residues and colouring matters)
 - Radiation level tests
- 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, colouring matters and metallic contamination)
 - ❑ Radiation level tests
- All samples were satisfactory.



6. Other food commodities

- About 3100 food samples were collected. Types included:

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

- All samples were satisfactory.

Follow-up actions

- Issue warning letter to the vendor concerned.
- Request the vendor concerned to stop sale of incriminated food item.
- Trace source of the incriminated food item.
- Seal the remaining products; and re-export them back to the country of origin (by the vendor concerned).
- Take follow-up samples for analysis if there is further importation of the same product
- Take prosecution actions if there is sufficient evidence.

Advice to the trade

- Comply with the legal requirements and follow Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). 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 when necessary.

Advice to consumers

- Fish contains many essential nutrients, such as omega-3 fatty acids and high quality proteins. Appropriate consumption of a variety of fish is recommended.
- As pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and young children are more susceptible to the effects of mercury, they should avoid large predatory fish when choosing fish dishes.
- Take a balanced diet so as to avoid excessive intake of certain harmful substances as a result of frequent consumption of a small range of food items.