

Food Safety Report for September 2012

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department



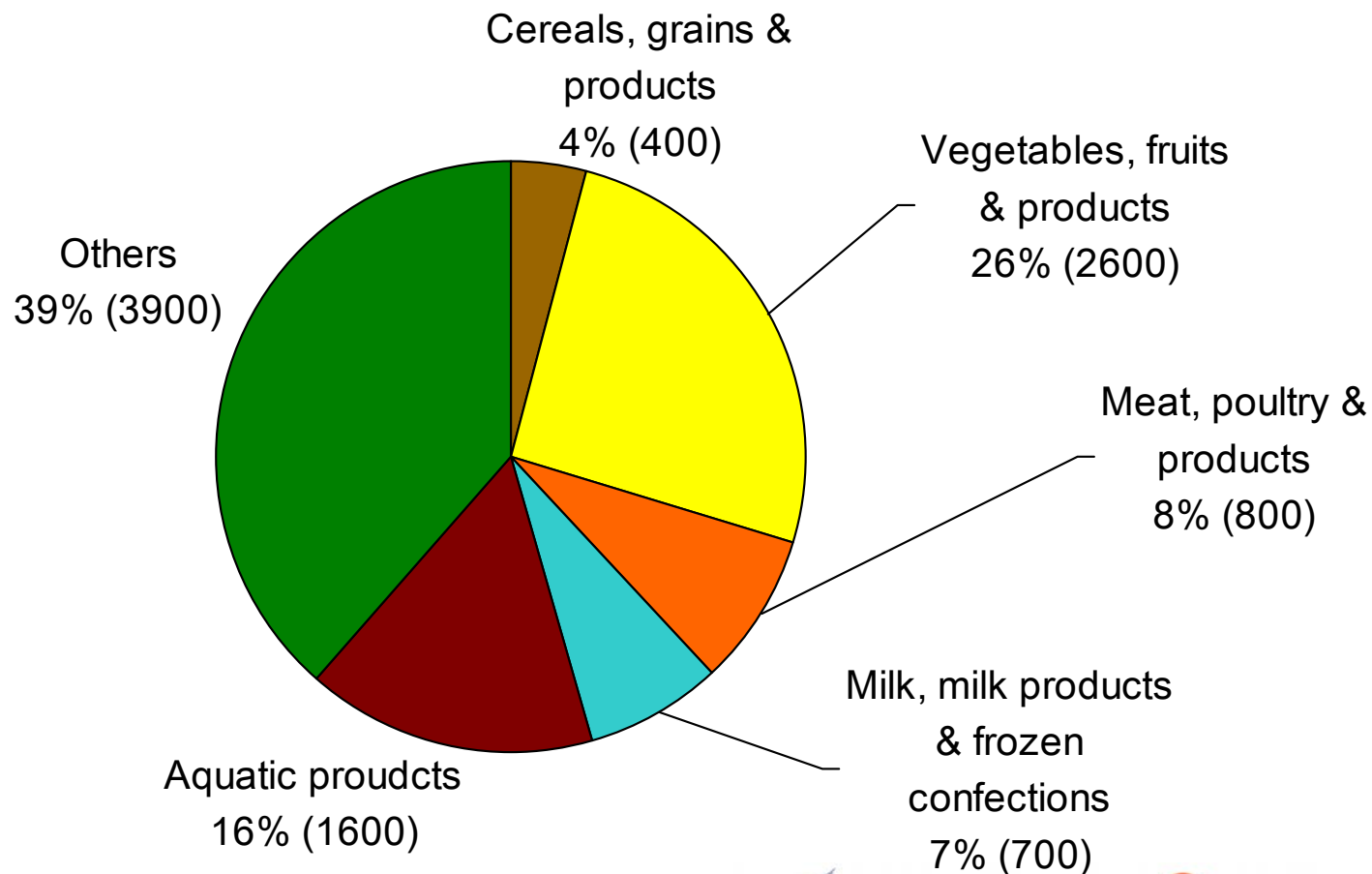
October 2012

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 September 2012.

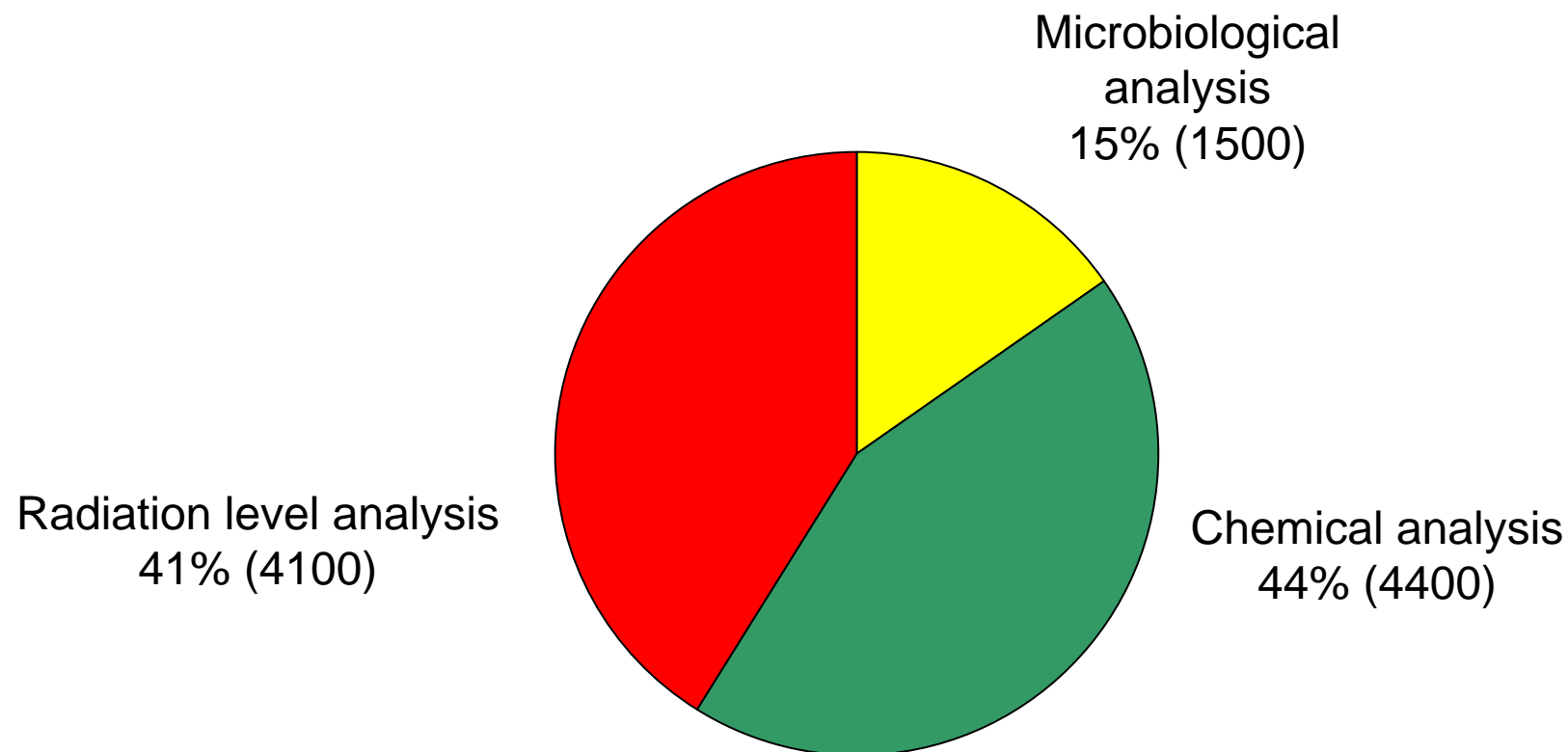
Types of food tested

- About 10000 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.

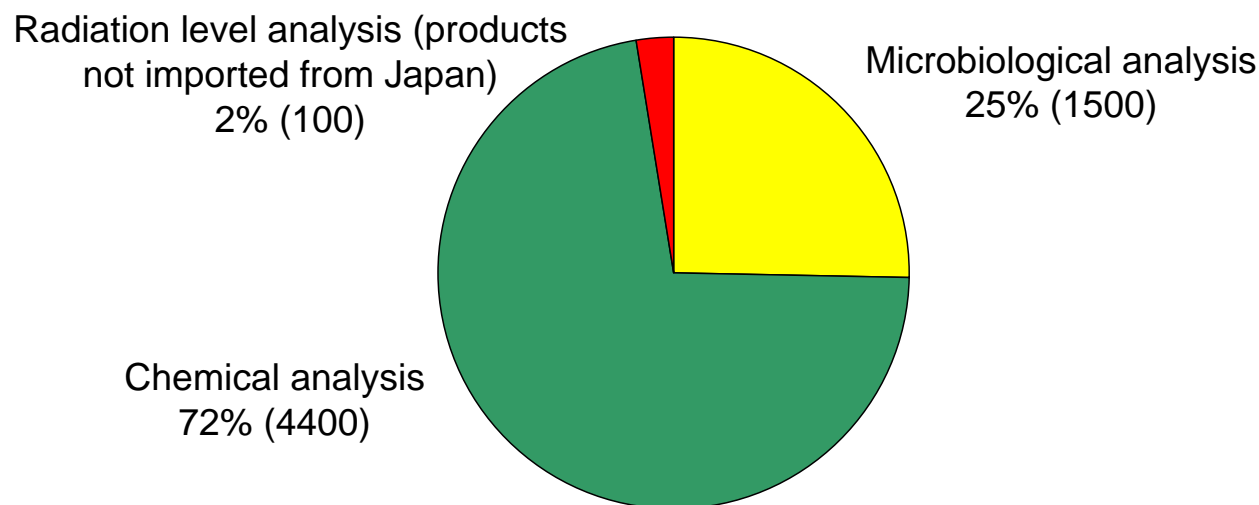
Types of testing



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Types of testing (Cont'd)

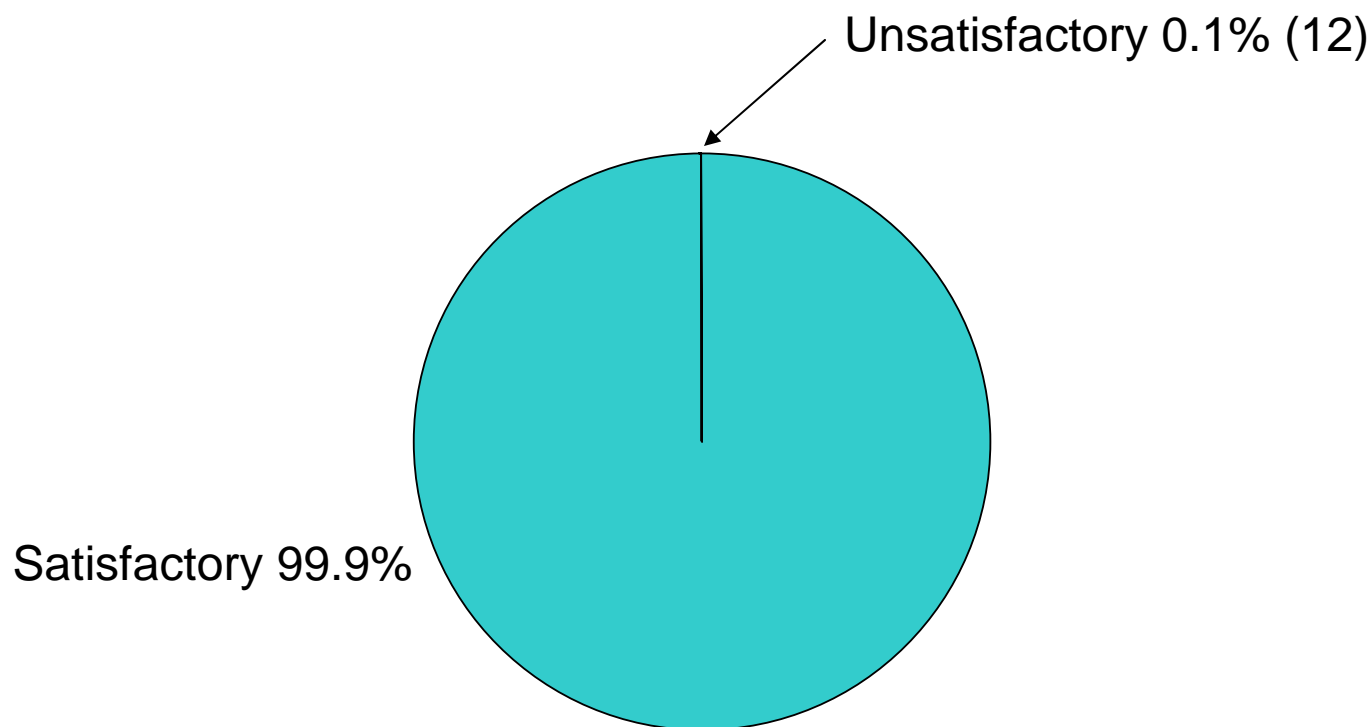
- In response to the Fukushima nuclear power plant incident in Japan, CFS has stepped up surveillance of imported Japanese food for testing of radiation level from mid-March 2011. In September 2012, all the radiation level test results of about 4000 samples were satisfactory.
- Except that, types of 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 were 12 unsatisfactory samples. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%.



Unsatisfactory samples

- 12 unsatisfactory food samples included 2 previously announced results. The remaining 10 unsatisfactory samples are as follows :

Food Group	<i>No. of Samples Tested</i>	<i>No. of Unsatisfactory Samples</i>
Vegetables, fruits & products	2600	1
Meat, poultry & products	800	0
Aquatic products	1600	2
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	700	5
Cereal, grains & products	400	0
Others	3900	2
<i>Total</i>	10000	10

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
 - Preservatives
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.96%, with 1 unsatisfactory sample in this report.



1. Vegetables, fruits & products (Cont'd)

Preservatives:

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result ⁽¹⁾
Straw mushroom	Dimethoate	15.8 ppm
	Omethoate	1.4 ppm

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

Other tests

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

2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 800 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 all satisfactory.



3. Aquatic products

- About 1600 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, toxins and veterinary drug residues)
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%, with 2 unsatisfactory samples in this report.



3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Chemical tests

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
1 frozen ling fillet	Mercury	0.8 ppm ⁽¹⁾

* The 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.

Microbiological tests

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
1 salmon sashimi	<i>Salmonella</i>	Present ⁽²⁾

(2) Exceeded the guideline's limit of not detected in 25g of food. *Salmonella* may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea.

3. Aquatic products (Cont'd)

Other tests

- Samples for other tests (e.g. preservatives, and veterinary drug residues) 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, preservatives, veterinary drug residues and colouring matters)
 - Radiation level tests
- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.3%, with 5 unsatisfactory samples in this report.



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

Microbiological tests :

- 5 unsatisfactory samples:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
5 frozen confections	Coliform count	1,700-2,300 /g ⁽¹⁾

(1) Coliform count is a hygienic indicator. The detected levels exceeded the legal limit of 100/g.

Other tests

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

5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 400 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.
- Analysis included:
 - Microbiological tests
 - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, pathogens)
 - Radiation level tests
- All samples were satisfactory.



6. Other food commodities

- About 3900 food samples were collected. Types included:

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

- Overall satisfactory rate was 99.9%. Other than the 2 bottled water samples found to contain *Pseudomonas* announced earlier, 2 other samples were found unsatisfactory.

6. Other food commodities (Cont'd)

Microbiological tests

- 2 unsatisfactory samples:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
1 sweet soup	<i>Bacillus cereus</i>	100,000/ml ⁽¹⁾
1 soymilk	<i>Escherichia coli</i>	52,000/ml ⁽²⁾

(1) Exceeded the guideline's limit (less than 100,000/ml). *Bacillus cereus* may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea.

(2) Exceeded the guideline's limit of less than 100/ml E.coli, suggesting unsatisfactory hygienic condition.

Follow-up actions

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

Advice for trade

- 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
- Importers of frozen confection should regularly check the temperature of transport and the temperature of equipment, like refrigerators, freezers and vending machine, and maintain a first-in-first-out principle to avoid prolonged storage which affects safety of frozen confections.
- Maintain a good recording system in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance to allow source tracing if needed.

Advice for consumers

- Purchase food and beverages from reliable shops and food premises.
- Fruit and vegetables are important components of a healthy diet as they are good sources of dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals. Vegetables should be soaked and washed thoroughly before consumption to remove chemicals like pesticide residues attached on the surface.
- Fish contain many essential nutrients, such as omega-3 fatty acids and high quality proteins. Moderate consumption of a variety of fish is recommended. 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.