Food Safety Report for May 2013

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department

June 2013

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Introduction

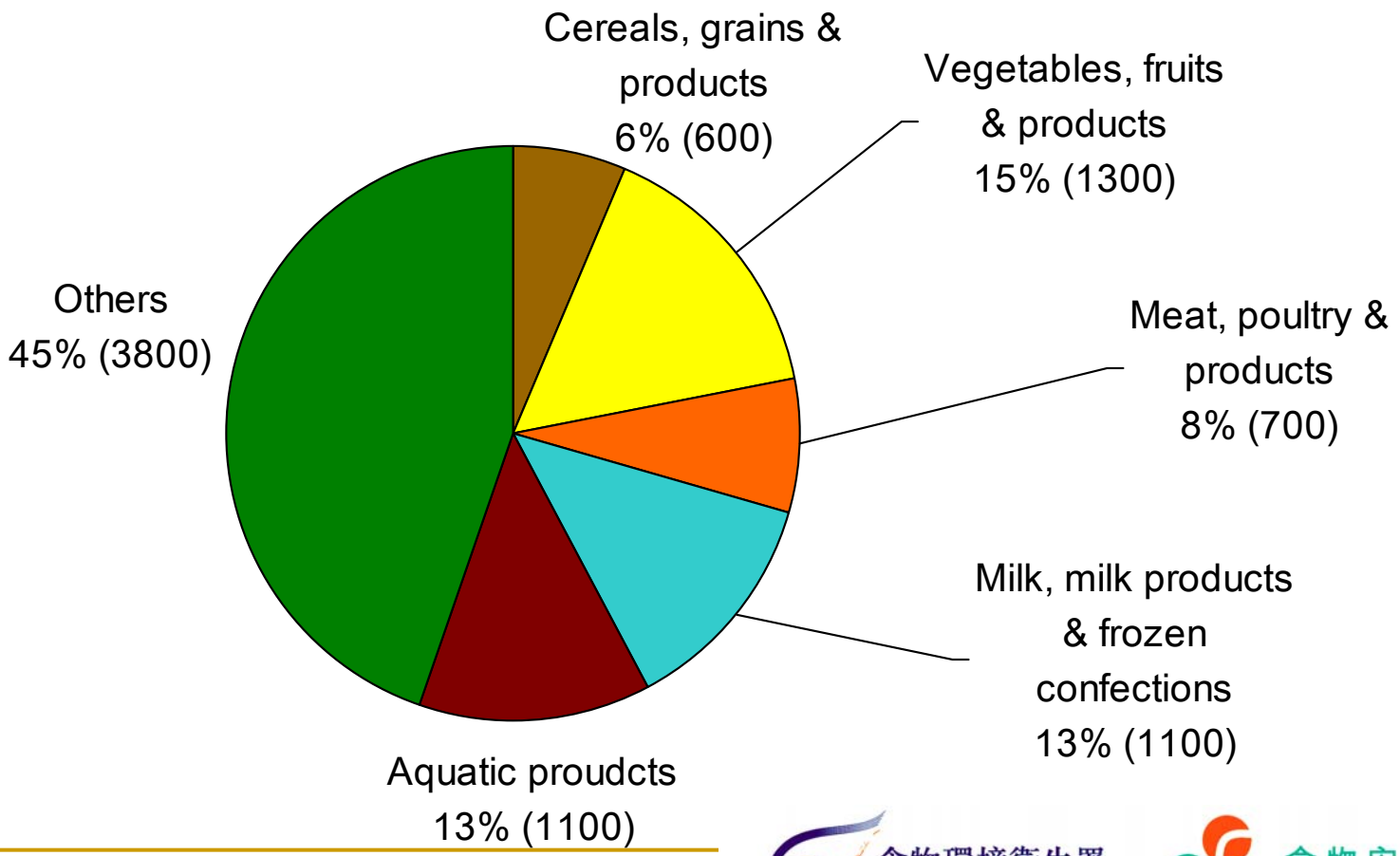
- The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) adopts the three-tier food surveillance approach, i.e. routine food surveillance, targeted food surveillance and seasonal food surveillance to collect samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for microbiological, chemical and radiological tests.

- 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 May 2013.

Types of food tested

- About 8600 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.

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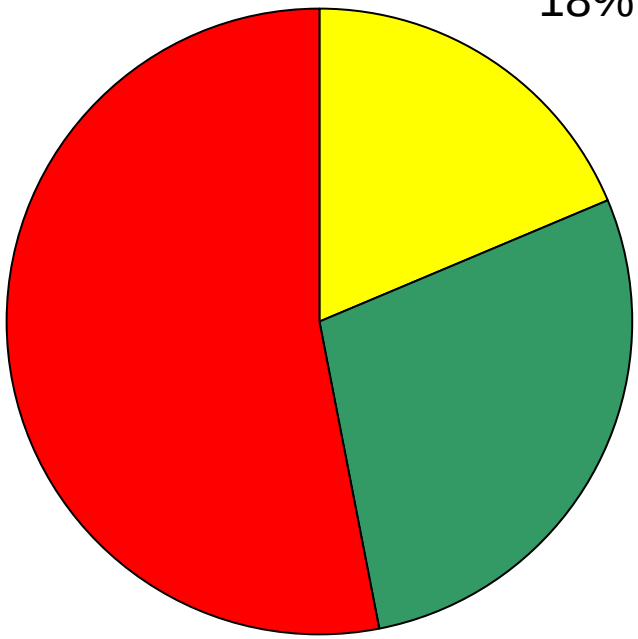
Types of testing



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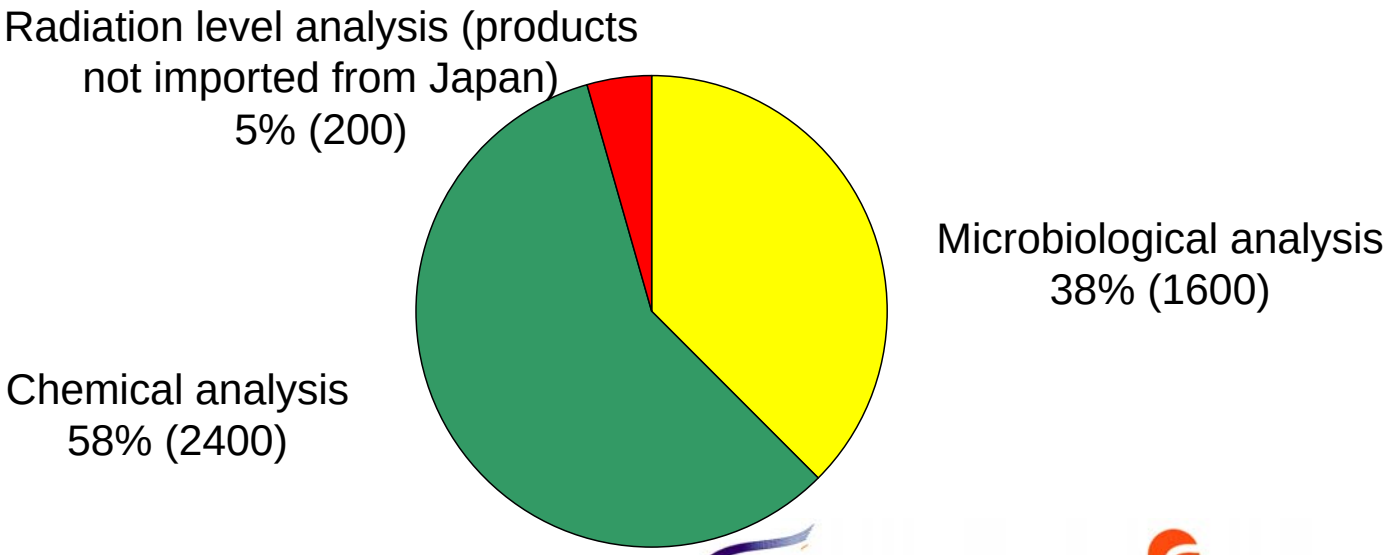
Types of testing (Cont'd)

- 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 May 2013, all the radiation level test results of about 4300 samples were satisfactory.

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



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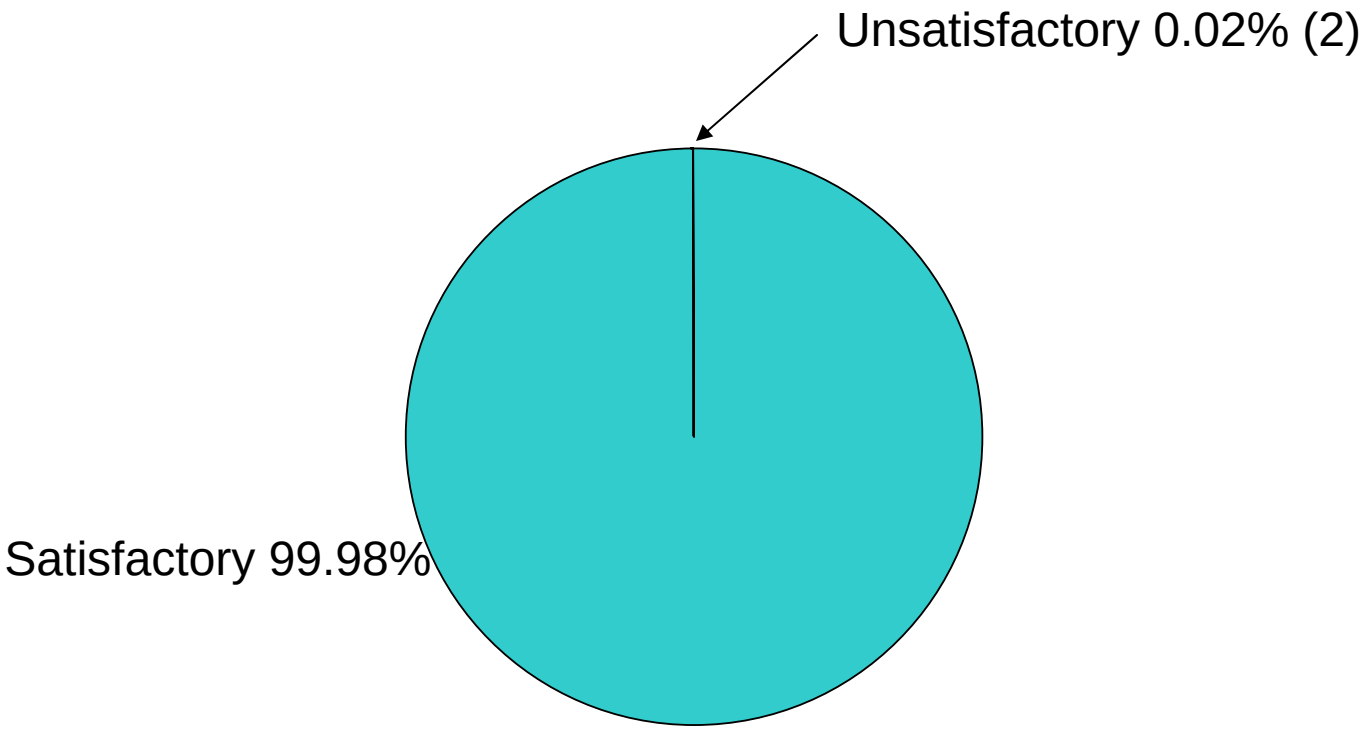
Overall results

- There were 2 unsatisfactory samples. Overall satisfactory rate was 99.98%.



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Unsatisfactory samples

- 2 unsatisfactory food samples included 1 previously announced result. The remaining 1 unsatisfactory sample is as follows :

Food Group	*No. of Samples Tested*	*No. of Unsatisfactory Samples*
Vegetables, fruits & products	**1300**	**0**
Meat, poultry & products	**700**	**0**
Aquatic & related products	**1100**	**1**
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	**1100**	**0**
Cereal, grains & products	**600**	**0**
Others	**3800**	**0**
Total	**8600**	**1**

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

1. Vegetables, fruits & products

- About 1300 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
    - Pathogens
  - Radiation level tests

- All samples were satisfactory.

2. Meat, poultry & products

- About 700 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.





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3. Aquatic and related 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, toxins and veterinary drug residues)
  - Radiation level tests

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




3. Aquatic and related products (Cont'd)

Preservatives

- 1 unsatisfactory sample:

Sample	Unsatisfactory testing item	Result
Dried shrimp	Sulphur dioxide	2100 ppm (1)

(1) The level exceeded the legal limit (30 ppm). It is of low toxicity and it is unlikely that it would pose any adverse health effect to consumers upon normal consumption. However, for individuals who are allergic to this preservative, there may be symptoms of breathing difficulty, headache and nausea

Other tests

- Samples for other tests (e.g. pathogens, metallic contamination, toxins and veterinary drug residues) were satisfactory.

4. Milk, milk products & frozen confections

- About 1100 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 99.9%. Except for a previously announced unsatisfactory sample of a slim milk (total bacterial count exceeded limit), the remained samples were satisfactory.

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5. Cereal, grains and products

- About 600 samples included rice/noodles, flour, bread and breakfast cereal.

- Analysis included:
  - Microbiological tests
  - Chemical tests (e.g. preservatives, pesticide residues and metallic contamination)
  - Radiation level tests

- All samples were satisfactory.




6. Other food commodities

- About 3800 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 ▫ Microbiological tests, preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination	Eggs and egg products ▫ Colouring matters and melamine
Sushi and sashimi ▫ Microbiological tests	Others ▫ Plasticisers, preservatives and colouring matters, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
Sugar and sweets ▫ Preservatives, colouring matters and metallic contamination	

- All samples were satisfactory.

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

- The 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 source food from reliable suppliers and maintain a good recording system in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance to allow source tracing if needed.

Advice for consumers

- Sulphur dioxide is a food preservative of low toxicity. It is also water-soluble and most of it tends to be removed through washing and cooking. For susceptible individuals who are allergic to sulphur dioxide, they may experience breathing difficulty, headache and nausea.

- Consumers should patronize reliable premises for buying food. They should also maintain balanced diet to minimize food risk.