
Targeted Food Surveillance on Microbiological Quality of Ice-cream and Frozen Confections

Centre for Food Safety

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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Background

- Ice-creams and frozen confections are popular in the summer. However, improper handling of these products such as storing in places with poor hygiene or keeping at temperature not low enough (should be -18°C or below) are both conducive to bacterial growth.
- In view of this, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has conducted a targeted food surveillance regularly since 2007 to assess the microbiological quality of ice-cream and frozen confections.

Types of test

- The CFS collected 1100 samples of ice-cream and frozen confections from food factories, mobile vans, supermarkets, restaurants and retail outlets for microbiological tests from May to June this year:
 - Total bacterial count (TBC)
 - Coliform organisms
 - Pathogens (e.g. *Salmonella*, *Staphylococcus aureus*)



Results

- The results for all sample were satisfactory.



Advice for trade

■ Manufacturers

- ❑ Ensure the products are fit for consumption and can meet legal requirements.
- ❑ Obtain ingredients (e.g. milk, cream and ice-cream mix) from licensed and reliable sources.
- ❑ Establish and practise food safety control plans such as Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point (HACCP).

■ Retailers & Mobile Van

- ❑ Discard the defrosted products and do not re-freeze melted frozen confection for sale
- ❑ Drain off and discard the leftover of soft ice-cream daily.
- ❑ Cleanse and sanitize all equipment and utensils each day.
- ❑ Observe good hygienic practices during all preparation and handling processes (including personal hygiene of food handlers). Keep both hands clean.

Advice for consumers

- Buy ice-cream and frozen confections from reliable shops.
- Do not buy or consume any ice-cream and frozen confections which is out of expiry date or not in a good quality.
- Maintain a balanced diet. Avoid over-eating of ice-cream as it is generally high in energy.