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# Seasonal Food Surveillance on Microbiological Quality of Poon Choi

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Centre for Food Safety

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

December 2010

# Background

- “Poon choi” are popular food for the Winter Solstice Festival. There had been previous cases of bacterial food poisoning outbreaks associated with this food.
- Therefore, a seasonal food surveillance project conducted by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) is continued this year to assess the microbiological quality in “poon choi”.



# Types of test item

- The CFS collected 15 samples from restaurants and food factories for testing of food poisoning organisms including:
  - *Bacillus cereus*,
  - *Clostridium perfringens*
  - *Salmonella* spp.
  - *Staphylococcus aureus*
  - *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*

# Overall results

- All samples were satisfactory.



# Advice for the trade

- Check the quality of food and food ingredients upon receipt.
- Store food and food ingredients at safe temperatures e.g. perishable items at 4°C or below.
- Avoid preparing “poon choi” and its ingredients too far in advance.
- For “poon choi” to be transported, keep hot “poon choi” above 60°C and chilled “poon choi” at 4°C or below.
- Reduce the cooling time of cooked food, for example, by dividing into small portions, placing in shallow containers.

# Advice for consumers

- Order “poon choi” from licensed and reliable supplier.
- Consume as soon as possible. Avoid prolonged storage of “poon choi” at room temperature to reduce the risk of bacteria growth.
- Keep “poon choi” above 60°C if it is not consumed immediately.
- If there is abnormal taste or smell, stop consumption immediately.
- Maintain a balanced diet to minimize risk and to avoid eating too much food with high energy, sugar, fat and/or cholesterol.