

Seasonal Food Surveillance on Microbiological Quality of Poon Choi

Centre for Food Safety

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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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.
- If “poon choi” has 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 minimise food risks and avoid foods that are high in energy, sugar, salt, fat and/or cholesterol.