

Advice to the Public on Contaminants and Food Safety

Background

In view of the recent social events, there are public concerns that food may be contaminated by tear gas or other substances. The Centre for Food Safety has the following advice for members of the public.

Contaminants and Food Safety

In general, food may be contaminated by different substances in the environment. Whether contaminants will affect food safety depends on a number of factors, such as the storage conditions of the food, the duration of exposure and the concentration of contaminants, etc.

Advice to the Public

- Food should be properly stored in a suitable place such as a clean and covered food-grade container to reduce the risk of food contamination.
- In an indoor environment when tear gas is being released nearby, close all doors and windows, turn off the air conditioner, and seal the gaps over the doors and windows with wet towels to reduce the chance of contamination indoors. After any such incident, check whether the packaging of food is intact and whether any food is damaged or contaminated. For the sake of prudence, food suspected to be contaminated or showing abnormality should not be consumed.
- In general, contaminants on the surface of some kinds of food, such as fruits or vegetables, can be reduced by washing with running water. However, for the sake of prudence, food suspected to be contaminated or showing abnormality should not be consumed.
- For information on the health effects of tear gas, please visit the website of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health at <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/index.html>: Home>Health Topics>Health and Hygiene>Health Information about Tear Gas.