

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-FHB(FE)03****(Question Serial No. SV016)****Head:** (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**Subhead (No. & title):** (-) Not Specified**Programme:** (1) Food Safety and Public Health**Controlling Officer:** Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)**Director of Bureau:** Secretary for Food and Health**This question originates from:** Estimates on Expenditure Volume I Page 248 (if applicable)**Question (Member Question No.):**

Pursuant to the discussion on food surveillance, the Administration is requested to provide information on the number and details of test cases identified by the Centre for Food Safety to be unsatisfactory as compared with those identified and reported by the Consumer Council.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily**Reply:**

A detailed breakdown of unsatisfactory food samples by number, food group and major problems involved identified by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) under its Food Surveillance Programme from 2011 to 2013 is provided as follows -

Food Group	2011		2012		2013	
	No. of unsatisfactory samples	Major problems (No. of samples)	No. of unsatisfactory samples	Major problems (No. of samples)	No. of unsatisfactory samples	Major problems (No. of samples)
Vegetables, fruits & related products	20	metallic contamination(11)	19	metallic contamination(11)	8	metallic contamination(3)
		preservatives(4)		preservatives(3)		preservatives(3)
		pathogens(3)		pathogens(3)		pesticide residues(2)
		pesticide residues(2)		pesticide residues(2)		
Meat, poultry & related products	25	sulphur dioxide in fresh meat(14)	28	sulphur dioxide in fresh meat(23)	4	veterinary drug residues(1)
		veterinary drug residues(7)		preservatives(1)		preservatives(3)
		preservatives(3)		pathogens(4)		
		pathogens(1)				

Aquatic products and related products	19	metallic contamination(6) ----- veterinary drug residues(6) ----- preservatives(4) ----- toxins(2) ----- colouring matters(1)	20	metallic contamination(9) ----- veterinary drug residues(5) ----- toxins(5) ----- pathogens(1)	7	metallic contamination(3) ----- veterinary drug residue(1) ----- preservatives(1) ----- pathogens(2)
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	39	hygienic indicators(37) ----- pathogens(1) ----- preservatives(1)	42	hygienic indicators(24) ----- nutrients(17) ----- preservatives(1)	24	hygienic indicators(24)
Cereal, grains and related products	3	metallic contamination(3)	0		1	metallic contamination(1)
Others	68	pathogens(9) ----- plasticisers(49) ----- preservatives(7) ----- toxins(2) ----- colouring matters(1)	23	hygienic indicators(1) ----- pathogens(7) ----- plasticisers(3) ----- preservatives(7) ----- colouring matters(1) ----- polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons(3) ----- antioxidant(1)	13	pathogens(5) ----- preservatives(3) ----- colouring matters(5)
Total	174		132		57	

Enforcement actions were taken promptly upon detection of non-compliance cases. The food surveillance results were announced by press releases, as well as uploaded onto CFS' website and Facebook Page (Note 1) in a timely manner.

A detailed breakdown of suspected unsatisfactory food samples concerning food safety by number, food group and major problems involved, identified by the Consumer Council from 2011 to 2013 and known to CFS, is provided as follows -

Food Group	2011		2012		2013	
	No. of suspected unsatisfactory samples	Major problems (No. of samples)	No. of suspected unsatisfactory samples	Major problems (No. of samples)	No. of suspected unsatisfactory samples	Major problems (No. of samples)
Vegetables, fruits & related products	0		0		0	
Meat, poultry & related products	0		0		0	
Aquatic products and related products	0		0		0	
Milk, milk products & frozen confections	0		0		0	
Cereal, grains and related products	0		0		3 (Note 3)	metallic contamination (3)
Others	12 (Note 2)	hygienic indicators(11) ----- pathogen(1)	0		12 (Note 4)	antibiotics residues(6) ----- pesticide residues(6)
Total	12		0		15	

CFS followed up on the above cases according to established procedures.

Note 1: CFS launched its Facebook page in October 2013.

Note 2: All 12 cases were identified during joint studies by the Consumer Council and CFS.

Note 3: All three cases (all concerning rice) were detected with cadmium levels exceeding the legal limit. Based on the information provided by the Consumer Council, CFS conducted risk assessment on the samples concerned, and concluded that normal consumption of the samples at the reported levels of cadmium is unlikely to pose any adverse health effects for average consumers. Subsequent surveillance revealed that one of the products concerned was found to be on sale. The sample taken was tested with a cadmium level exceeding the legal limit. CFS promptly issued a press release and sent warning letters to the retailer and the distributor concerned, ordering them to suspend sale of the affected batch of the product to ensure food safety and safeguard public health.

Note 4: All 12 cases (all concerning honey) were detected with low / trace levels of antibiotics or pesticide residues. Based on the information provided by the Consumer Council, CFS conducted risk assessment on the samples concerned, and concluded that adverse health effects due to normal consumption of the samples at the reported levels of antibiotics and pesticide residues were unlikely.