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焦點個案

Incident in Focus

冷藏肉類的食物安全貼士

Frozen Meat: Tips for Food Safety

食物安全中心風險傳達組
科學主任陳蓉蓉女士報告
Reported by Ms. Melva CHEN, Scientific Officer,
Risk Communication Section, Centre for Food Safety

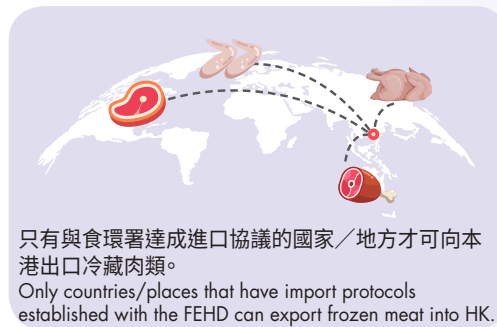
隨着2019冠狀病毒病大流行,不少家庭對冷藏肉類及家禽等冷藏食品的需求增加,部分原因是這些食品的保質期較長,可貯存於雪櫃冰格備用。本文將就冷藏肉類提供一些食物安全貼士。

本港如何規管冷藏肉類?

冷藏肉類主要來自巴西、中國內地、美國、加拿大及荷蘭等地。在本港,凡進口肉類,包括冷藏肉類,必須符合特定的法例要求。《進口野味、肉類、家禽及蛋類規例》(第132AK章)第4(1)(a)條規定,進口肉類或家禽必須附有食物環境衛生署(食環署)署長認可的發證實體所簽發的衛生證明書。《進出口條例》(第60章)則規定,進口肉類及家禽須受進口簽證管制,這些食品的進口許可證由食環署負責簽發。此外,進口商須向可靠的供應商採購肉類、取得衛生證明書、申請進口許可證,以及確保這些肉類適宜供人食用。除了進口管制外,這些食品與市面上出售的所有其他食品一樣,亦屬恆常監測及檢測之列,涵蓋進口、批發及零售層面。

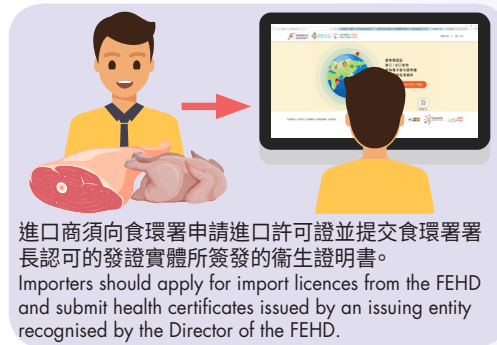
購買和貯存冷藏肉類須知

消費者應光顧衛生情況良好的店舖,這些店舖會把待售的冷藏肉類展示於攝氏零下18度或以下(即抑制細菌生長的溫度)的冷藏櫃內。購買預先包裝的冷藏肉類時,應檢查食用期限。如購買散裝的冷藏肉類,則應確定是否冰硬及表面乾燥。



只有與食環署達成進口協議的國家/地方才可向本港出口冷藏肉類。

Only countries/places that have import protocols established with the FEHD can export frozen meat into HK.



進口商須向食環署申請進口許可證並提交食環署署長認可的發證實體所簽發的衛生證明書。

Importers should apply for import licences from the FEHD and submit health certificates issued by an issuing entity recognised by the Director of the FEHD.



食環署處理申請及發出進口許可證。

The FEHD processes applications and issues import licences.



食物安全中心會在進口、批發及零售層面抽取樣本進行檢測。

The Centre for Food Safety will take samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for testing.

圖1: 冷藏肉類的規管制度

Figure 1: Regulation Regime of Frozen Meat

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic sees an increased demand for frozen foods such as meat and poultry for many families. Part of the reasons are that they have longer shelf lives and can be stored in a freezer for later use. This article will pinpoint some food safety issues of frozen meat.

How is Frozen Meat Regulated in Hong Kong?

Frozen meat mainly comes from Brazil, mainland China, the USA, Canada and the Netherlands etc. Locally, there are specific legal requirements for the import of meats including frozen meat. Regulation 4(1)(a) of the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations, Cap. 132AK, requires meat or poultry to be imported with a health certificate issued by an issuing entity recognised by the Director of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). Under the Import and Export Ordinance, Cap. 60, import of meat and poultry is subject to import licensing control. The FEHD is responsible for issuing import licences for these foods. Moreover, importers are obliged to source meats from reliable suppliers, obtain health certificates, apply for import licences and ensure the meats are fit for human consumption. Besides import control, like all other food sold on the market, routine surveillance and testing are in place at import, wholesale and retail levels.

Issues on Buying and Storing Frozen Meat

Consumers should patronise hygienic shops that display

焦點個案
Incident in Focus

冷藏食品如一直貯存於攝氏零下18度或以下，可長期保持食用安全，儘管品質可能會在三至六個月後開始下降。冷藏肉類購買後如非立即使用，應盡快將之放進雪櫃冰格。按照生產商的指示貯存產品，並在過期前食用。散裝的產品可用保鮮紙包好或放入膠袋內，並註明購買日期。使用時採取「先入先出」的原則。

解凍冷藏肉類

冷藏不能殺滅細菌。在室溫下或以熱水進行解凍並不適宜。冷藏肉類的溫度一旦高於攝氏4度，冷藏前已存在於肉類中的細菌便可再度活躍起來並開始繁殖。因此，冷藏肉類應放在攝氏0度至4度的雪櫃內解凍。為了防止肉類的汁液滴下至即食食物上造成交叉污染，應把肉類放在防漏的容器或包裝中。如需快速解凍冷藏肉類，可用流動的冷水或微波爐進行解凍。不過，這兩種方法會使肉類部分或全部置於有利細菌滋生的危險溫度範圍(即攝氏4度至60度)。因此，以冷水或微波爐解凍的冷藏肉類必須立即烹煮。

冷藏肉類必須徹底煮熟

肉類應徹底煮熟至中心溫度達攝氏75度或以上。雖然不經解凍便烹煮食物是安全的(包括冷藏肉類，尤其是切成小塊或薄片的)，但食用前仍必須把食物徹底煮熟。某些食品無需解凍便可烹煮，例如冷藏雞塊、冷藏餃子等。然而，未經解凍的肉類不宜直接以慢煮鍋烹煮，因為肉類置於危險溫度範圍的時間可能會過長，令有害細菌可以迅速增長。

應否再次冷藏？

已解凍或部分解凍的食物不宜再次冷藏，除非食物是以正確方式在雪櫃中解凍，並一直保持於攝氏4度以下，使細菌難以生長。再次冷藏以正確方式解凍的食物可能會降低食物的品質，但食物在徹底煮熟後仍可安全食用。

注意事項

1. 本港對肉類及肉類製品(包括冷藏肉類)實施進口管制及恆常監測。
2. 肉類如以正確方式冷藏於攝氏零下18度或以下，可延長保質期。
3. 冷藏肉類應以適當溫度解凍和烹煮，以確保食物安全。

給消費者的建議

- 消費者應向衛生良好並可靠的店鋪購買冷藏肉類，這些店鋪會把待售的冷藏肉類展示於溫度控制適當的冷藏櫃內。
- 冷藏肉類應貯存於攝氏零下18度或以下，並放在攝氏0度至4度的雪櫃內解凍。
- 冷藏肉類必須徹底煮熟至中心溫度達攝氏75度或以上。

給業界的建議

- 進口商須向可靠的供應商採購肉類或肉類製品，並取得相關的合資格出口國所簽發的衛生證明書。
- 注意巴西肉類、家禽及蛋類進口香港的**新安排**(包括合資格廠房及新修訂的衛生證明書)。
- 在冷藏肉類的收貨、加工、貯存、運輸、分銷及零售過程中維持良好的溫度控制。

frozen meat for sale in the freezer cabinet kept at -18°C or below, the temperatures that stop bacteria growth. For prepackaged frozen meat, check the expiry date. If you are buying loose packed frozen meat, make sure it is ice-hard and its surface is dry.

Frozen foods stored continuously at -18°C or below can be kept safe for a long time, though the quality of the food may begin to decline after the first three to six months. Frozen meat, if not used right away, should be placed in a freezer as soon as possible after purchasing. Follow the manufacturer's storage instructions and consume the products before the expiry date. For loose packed products, you can wrap them in plastic wrap or put them into plastic bags and mark the date of purchase. Upon usage, follow the "first-in, first-out" rule.

Thawing Frozen Meats

Freezing cannot kill bacteria. It is not advisable to thaw at room temperature or in hot water. As soon as frozen meat become warmer than 4°C, bacteria present in meat before freezing can become active and start to multiply. Therefore, frozen meat should be thawed in a refrigerator at 0°C to 4°C. To prevent cross-contamination due to dripping of meat juice onto ready-to-eat food, the meat should be placed in a leak-proof container or package. For fast thawing, frozen meat can be thawed under cold running water or in a microwave oven. However, these two methods will let the meat or part of the meat enter the temperature danger zone (i.e. 4 - 60°C) that favours bacterial growth. So, frozen meat thawed by cold water or microwave has to be cooked immediately.

Frozen Meat Should Always be Cooked Thoroughly

Meat should be cooked thoroughly with its core temperature reaching 75°C or above. Although it is safe to cook foods including frozen meat, especially those with small or thin cuts, without thawing, they must be thoroughly cooked before consumption. Although some frozen food items are designed to be cooked without thawing, such as frozen chicken nuggets, frozen dumplings, etc, it is not recommended to cook unthawed meat directly in a slow cooker because it may keep the meat in the temperature danger zone for too long, which allows rapid growing of harmful bacteria.

Refreezing: To Do or Not to Do?

Refreezing of thawed or partially thawed food is not recommended, unless the food is properly thawed in the refrigerator consistently kept below 4°C that the growth of bacteria is retarded. Refreezing of properly thawed food may reduce the quality of the food, but it will remain safe to eat after it is thoroughly cooked.

Key Points to Note

1. In Hong Kong, import control and routine surveillance are in place for meat and meat products including frozen meat.
2. Meat kept properly in the freezer at or under -18°C has an extended shelf life.
3. Frozen meat should be thawed and cooked at proper temperatures to ensure food safety.

Advice to Consumers

- Purchase frozen meat from hygienic and reliable shops that display frozen meat for sale inside freezer cabinets with proper temperature control.
- Store frozen meat at or below -18°C and thaw in a refrigerator at 0 - 4°C.
- Frozen meat must be cooked thoroughly with core temperature reaching 75°C or above.

Advice to the Trade

- Importers are required to source meat or meat products from reliable suppliers and obtain health certificates issued by relevant eligible exporting countries.
- Take note of the **new arrangement** (including eligible establishments and updated health certificates) of import of Brazilian meat, poultry and eggs into Hong Kong.
- Maintain good temperature control during receiving, processing, storage, transport, distribution and retailing of frozen meat.

再談2019冠狀病毒病 - 食物業篇

More Issues on COVID-19 in Food Business

食物安全中心風險評估組
科學主任莊梓傑博士報告

Reported by Dr. Ken CHONG, Scientific Officer,
Risk Assessment Section, Centre for Food Safety

2019冠狀病毒病主要經呼吸道飛沫傳播，但亦可通過接觸傳播，因而令人關注觸摸受污染的物件，包括食品包裝，是否會感染此病。今期我們會談談與食物業相關的2019冠狀病毒病問題，並概述重點的衛生措施。

While the main mode of transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is through respiratory droplets, it can also be transmitted through contact. This makes some people concern whether touching contaminated objects, including food packaging, could contract the disease. In this issue, we will look into the matters related to COVID-19 in food business and highlight key hygienic measures.

2019冠狀病毒病可經食品包裝傳播嗎？

最近有研究發現，在受控的實驗條件下，新型冠狀病毒可在物件表面存活數小時至數天。然而，這病毒不能在食物或食品包裝上繁殖，故在現實生活中透過食品包裝感染這病毒的風險似乎甚低。世界衛生組織表示，人類不大可能從食物或食品包裝感染2019冠狀病毒病。到目前為止，亦沒有證據顯示引致呼吸系統疾病的病毒可經食物或食品包裝傳播。在本港至今累計的一千多宗個案中，並無發現可能透過食品包裝傳播病毒的病例。

Can COVID-19 be Transmitted by Food Packaging?

Recent research suggested that the novel coronavirus can survive on surfaces or objects for few hours to several days under controlled, experimental conditions. However, the virus cannot multiply in food or food packaging. The risk of acquiring the virus through food packaging appears to be very low in the real-life situation. The World Health Organization states that it is highly

消費者應否消毒食品包裝？

事實上，雙手受污染是促進間接接觸傳播的主要因素，傳染性病毒可經雙手從一個表面被帶到另一個表面，甚至進入人體。與食品包裝相比，頻密接觸點(例如門柄、購物車把手及水龍頭)更容易傳播病毒—不同人觸摸的頻率越高，受污染的風險便越大。因此，雖然有人可能仍會選擇在有需要時以常見的家用消毒劑(例如酒精濕紙巾或噴劑)來消毒食品包裝表面，但更重要的是要徹底清洗雙手，尤其在觸摸眼、鼻、口之前；購買食物回家後；以及處理和存放所買的食品後。

食物業員工 Food Workers



餐飲供應及食品零售 Catering and Retail Food



食物業如何同心抗疫？

食物業不斷為市民提供日常生活所需，有必要採取適當的衛生措施來保障員工及消費者的健康。首要措施是，如有發燒或出現呼吸道感染病徵，應停止上班和避免前往人多擠逼的地

圖1: 食物業如何減少社交接觸
Figure 1: Physical Distancing in Food Business

unlikely that people can contract COVID-19 from food or food packaging. To date, there is also no evidence of viruses that cause respiratory illnesses being transmitted via food or food packaging. Among some 1000 cases reported locally in Hong Kong by far, there is no case identified to be potentially transmitted through food packaging.

Should Consumers Sanitise Food Packaging?

In fact, contaminated hands play a significant role in facilitating indirect contact transmission by transferring the infectious virus from one surface to another and even into one's body. Instead of food packaging, transmission is more likely to happen in contact with certain high-touch points, such as door handles, handles of the shopping trolleys and water taps – the more frequently being touched by different people, the higher the risk that it becomes contaminated. Therefore, while some people may still opt to disinfect food packaging surfaces with common household disinfectants such as alcohol-based wipes or sprays if needed, it is more important for people to wash their hands thoroughly, especially before touching eyes, nose and mouth, after returning home from grocery shopping and after handling and storing purchased products.

個人衛生 Personal Hygiene



環境衛生 Environmental Hygiene



食物衛生 Food Hygiene

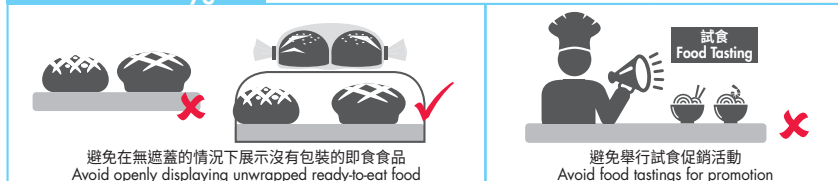


圖2: 如何加強衛生
Figure 2: Enhancement of Hygiene

What Can Food Business Do to Fight COVID-19 Together?

While food business continues to cater for daily needs of the public, it is important to set up appropriate hygienic measures to ensure the health of employees and consumers. It is crucial that people with fever or respiratory symptoms should refrain from work and avoid going to crowded places, wear a surgical mask and seek medical advice promptly. Staff should wear a surgical mask when

方，戴上外科口罩及盡早求醫。員工與公眾面對面或在人多擠迫的地方工作時，應佩戴外科口罩，並應定期量度體溫。其他措施包括向員工發出健康指引、提供洗手設施，以及確保工作環境清潔衛生。員工必須經常清潔和消毒物件表面，特別是食物業店內的頻密接觸點。食物業員工應經常洗手，如出現2019冠狀病毒病的病徵，例如發燒、咳嗽及呼吸困難，就不應上班，並盡早向醫生求診。盡可能減少在食物業環境中的社交接觸，即人與人之間要保持至少1米距離，以減低疾病傳播的風險。如因空間所限，無法留有足夠的社交距離，可考慮採取其他隔離措施(見圖1)。

除了衛生防護中心發出的健康指引外，食物業可參考圖2所示加強衛生的建議，以防止2019冠狀病毒病傳播。

最後也同樣重要的是，食物業經營者應繼續遵守食物安全守則，例如「[食物安全五要點](#)」及「[食物安全重點控制](#)」系統，以預防食源性疾病。

required to work face to face with the public or in a crowded area, as well as having their body temperature checked regularly. Other measures include disseminating health advice to employees, providing hand-washing facilities and ensuring a clean and hygienic work environment. Clean and disinfect surfaces frequently, particularly high touch points in stores of food business. Food workers should wash hands frequently and refrain from work and seek medical advice when having symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, cough and shortness of breath. Maintain physical distancing, i.e. at least 1 metre between persons, in food business environments as far as possible to reduce the risk of disease transmission. Wherever there is space constraint to allow sufficient physical distance, other separation measures can be considered. (See Figure 1)

In addition to the health advice given by the [Centre for Health Protection](#), relevant recommendations on enhancing hygiene in food business to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are illustrated in Figure 2.

Last but not least, food business operators should continue to uphold food safety practices, e.g. the [Five Keys to Food Safety](#), and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system to prevent foodborne illnesses.

食物事故點滴
Food Incident
Highlight

進食河豚的危險

上月，衛生署公布一宗懷疑河豚毒素中毒個案，患者進食自己捕獲的河豚後需入院治理，情況危殆。

進食河豚是造成河豚毒素食物中毒個案的主要原因。河豚毒素是一種毒性強烈的海洋生物神經毒素，主要分佈於河豚的魚卵、魚肝及魚皮。然而，在清洗和切除內臟等處理過程中，河豚的其他部分(例如魚肉)也有可能被河豚毒素污染。河豚毒素可影響人的中樞神經系統，嚴重者甚至可致命。這種毒素耐熱，烹煮不能將之消滅，目前亦無解毒劑。

為防發生河豚毒素引致的食物中毒個案，業界在進口和銷售魚類及魚製品時應謹慎，確保這些產品可供安全食用。市民亦不宜進食河豚。

The Dangers of Eating Puffer Fish

Last month, the Department of Health announced a suspected case of tetrodotoxin poisoning. The victim was admitted to hospital in critical condition after consuming puffer fish caught by himself.

Eating puffer fish is the main cause of tetrodotoxin food poisoning. Tetrodotoxin is a potent marine neurotoxin mainly found in the eggs, liver and skin of puffer fish. However, other parts of the fish such as flesh can also be contaminated by the toxin during processing, such as cleaning and eviscerating of the fish. Tetrodotoxin can affect a person's central nervous system and in severe cases may result in death. This toxin is heat-stable, cannot be destroyed by cooking and has no antidote to date.

To prevent tetrodotoxin-related food poisoning, the trade should pay attention to the import and sale of fish and fish products to ensure they are safe for consumption. The public is advised not to consume puffer fish.

巴西肉類，家禽及蛋類進口新安排 New Arrangement for Importing Brazilian Meat, Poultry and Eggs

因應二零一七年三月及九月分別發生涉及巴西肉類產品品質問題及偽造衛生證明書的事故，食物安全中心(食安中心)一直與巴西當局商討如何提升發生食物事故時的食物溯源效率、加強保障食物安全，以及進一步優化巴西肉類的進口規管。食安中心與巴西當局基於食物安全的考慮制訂了特定的進口要求，並就巴西肉類、家禽及蛋類的進口作出新安排。

新安排已由二零二零年五月十八日起實施。在新安排下，巴西當局只會向其認為合資格向香港出口肉類、家禽及蛋類的食物加工廠及處所簽發官方衛生證明書。巴西當局網站已列出這些合資格廠房的名單。此外，肉類、家禽及蛋類的官方衛生證明書已經修訂，範本可於食安中心網頁查閱：https://www.cfs.gov.hk/tc_chi/committee/Notes_and_Presentation_Materials_TCF_20191120.html

食安中心建議業界先確定有關廠房是否列於巴西當局網站公布的合資格名單內，才與他們進行肉類、家禽及蛋類貿易。

In light of the incidents concerning meat quality and falsified health certificates for meat products from Brazil in March and September 2017 respectively, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has been working with the Brazilian authority to improve the efficiency of food tracing in food incidents, enhance the safeguard of food safety and further refine the import regulation of Brazilian meat. The CFS and the Brazilian authority have worked out specific import requirements based on food safety considerations and made new arrangement for the import of meat, poultry and eggs from Brazil.

The new arrangement has been in effect since 18 May 2020. Under the new arrangement, the Brazilian authority will only issue official health certificates to food processing plants and premises which it considers eligible for exporting meat, poultry and eggs to Hong Kong. These eligible establishments are listed on the website of the Brazilian authority. In addition, the official health certificates for meat, poultry and eggs have been revised and samples of which can be viewed on the website of the CFS via the following link: https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/committee/Notes_and_Presentation_Materials_TCF_20191120.html

The CFS recommends the trade to ascertain that the establishments are on the eligible list posted on the website of the Brazilian authority before engaging in trading of meat, poultry and eggs with them.



風險傳達工作一覽 (二零二零年四月) Summary of Risk Communication Work (April 2020)

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