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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

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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 30 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.
- Reduce the cooling time of cooked food as far as possible, for example, by dividing into small portions or placing in shallow containers.
- Avoid preparing “poon choi” and its ingredients too far in advance.
- If transport of “poon choi” is required, hot “poon choi” should be kept above 60°C and chilled “poon choi” at 4°C or below.

# Advice for consumers

- Order “poon choi” from licensed and reliable supplier.
- Avoid prolonged storage of “poon choi” at room temperature to reduce the risk of bacteria growth.
- Consume cooked / reheated “poon choi” as soon as possible, or otherwise keep them at temperature above 60°C.
- If there is abnormal taste or smell, stop consumption immediately.
- Maintain a balanced diet and avoid foods that are high in energy, sugar, salt, fat and/or cholesterol.