Seasonal Food Surveillance on Microbiological Quality of Poon Choi

Centre for Food Safety

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

December 2013

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

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".

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食 物 安 全 中 心
Centre for Food Safety

Types of test item

- The CFS collected 40 samples from restaurants and food factories for testing of common food poisoning organisms, including:

  - *Bacillus cereus*
  - *Clostridium perfringens*
  - *Salmonella spp.*
  - *Staphylococcus aureus*
  - *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Overall results

- All samples were satisfactory.

食物環境衞生署
**Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department**

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

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.

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Advice for the trade

- 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.

- Provide consumers with clear advices on the proper way of storage and reheating of "poon choi" before consumption to further reduce the risk of food poisoning due to their incorrect handling

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

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.

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

Advice for consumers

- 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.

食物環境衞生署
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety