

Ice cream sample detected with coliform bacteria count exceeding legal limit

â€¢ The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (June 13) that a sample of locally manufactured pistachio-flavoured ice-cream was found to contain coliform bacteria and its count exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the incident.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from a licensed frozen confection factory in Sha Tin for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained 260 coliform bacteria per gram, exceeding the legal limit."

"The CFS has informed the frozen confection factory concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop selling and to dispose all the affected ice-cream immediately. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the staff of the frozen confection factory, who have also been requested to carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection of the premises," the spokesman said.

Under the Frozen Confections Regulation (Cap. 132AC), frozen confection for sale should not contain more than 100 coliform bacteria per gram. The maximum penalty for offenders is a fine of \$10,000 and three months' imprisonment upon conviction. The fact that the coliform count exceeded the legal limit indicated that the hygienic conditions were unsatisfactory, but did not mean that consumption would lead to food poisoning.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health. An investigation is ongoing.