

Ready-to-eat raw oyster sample detected with excessive E. coli

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (September 5) announced that a sample of ready-to-eat raw oysters was found with excessive Escherichia coli (E. coli). The CFS is following up on the case.

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from a restaurant in Mong Kok for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the most probable number of E. coli of the sample was at a level of 5 400 per 100 grams. According to the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if the most probable number of E. coli of live or raw bivalve molluscs intended for direct consumption exceeds the level of 700 per 100 grams, the sample is considered unsatisfactory," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS has informed the restaurant concerned of the above irregularity and instructed it to suspend the sale of the affected food product. The CFS has also inspected the food premises, provided education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff, and requested them to carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfection.

The spokesman pointed out that as oysters feed by filtering a large volume of seawater, pathogens can accumulate in them if they are grown in or harvested from contaminated water. Raw or partially cooked oysters are high-risk foods. Susceptible groups, such as pregnant women, young children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems or liver diseases, should avoid eating raw oysters.

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