

Results of targeted surveillance on Salmonella in ready-to-eat food all satisfactory

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 18) announced the results of a recently completed targeted food surveillance project on Salmonella in ready-to-eat food. All samples passed the test.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "A total of 300 ready-to-eat food samples were collected from different retailers (including online retailers) and food factories for testing of Salmonella this year. The samples included dishes containing eggs, poultry and their products."

Salmonella can be found in eggs and food of animal origin. There is a risk of contracting salmonellosis if a person consumes undercooked food of animal origin, eggs or egg products, or food cross-contaminated with Salmonella.

Salmonella infection may cause fever and gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. The effects on infants, young children, the elderly and patients with a weak immune system can be more severe and sometimes may even lead to death.

Despite the fact that the test results of the samples were all satisfactory, the spokesman reminded the trade and the public not to take the risk lightly. They should maintain good personal and food hygiene to safeguard food safety. For example, they should cook meat, poultry and eggs thoroughly to ensure the juices of the meat are not red, blood is not visible when cooked meat is cut and the egg yolk and white are firm. They should consume cooked food as soon as possible to avoid keeping it at room temperature for a long time. Food manufacturers should take adequate measures to eliminate Salmonella in food during the food production process, and prevent re-contamination of food such as cross-contamination by raw ingredients with Salmonella. Moreover, they may consider choosing pasteurised egg products or dried egg powder to prepare dishes not requiring heat treatment, in particular ready-to-eat desserts.