

Soft ice-cream sample detected with coliform bacteria exceeding legal limit

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (May 11) announced that a soft ice-cream sample was found to contain coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit. Follow-up is in progress.

"The Centre collected the above-mentioned soft ice-cream sample from a retail outlet with a frozen confection factory licence in Mong Kok for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained 280 coliform bacteria per gram, exceeding the legal limit," a spokesman for the CFS 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 bacteria exceeded the legal limit indicated that the hygienic conditions were unsatisfactory, but did not mean that consumption would lead to food poisoning.

"The CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed it to stop selling the affected soft ice-cream immediately. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the vendor concerned, and has requested them to carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be initiated," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health.