

Targeted Food Surveillance on Ready-to-eat Desserts

Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau

Food Safety Centre

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Targeted Food Surveillance

- **Objective:** The Centre proactively identifies the potential risks of targeted food items and assesses the safety of food items commonly consumed in Macao in order to safeguard food safety.



Targeted Food Surveillance

- The Centre conducts relevant analysis based on the types of food. Priority will be given to the popular food items.

Factors

Risk Level

Social Concern

Eating Habits

Food Incidents



Ready-to-eat Desserts

■ Ready-to-eat Desserts

Ready-to-eat desserts refer to ready-to-eat snacks with sweet taste or sweet foods. They can be served either cold or hot, including Chinese-style sweet soup such as red bean sweet soup and sago sweet soup, etc..



Surveillance on Ready-to-eat Desserts

- Chilled ready-to-eat desserts, such as red bean sweet soup, sago sweet soup and sesame sweet soup, are popular treat to cool off from the summer heat. Most chilled ready-to-eat desserts are cooked at high temperatures, and this processing step eliminates most of the microorganisms.
- However, if desserts are not properly handled after cooking, e.g. cooling in inappropriate temperature, prolonged storage at room temperature, etc., may lead to a higher risk of microbiological contamination.
- Therefore, the Food Safety Centre has carried out this targeted surveillance on chilled ready-to-eat desserts available in local market, in order to investigate the safety of such products.

Market Surveillance

Popularity

Covers various ready-to-eat desserts in the market, such as red bean sweet soup, sago sweet soup, etc..

Location

Local dessert shops and sweet soup shops and convenience stores.

Types of Samples

■ Collected a total of 60 samples of chilled ready-to-eat desserts, which include:



Sesame sweet soup



Sago sweet soup



Red bean sweet soup



Mango sago dessert
with pomelo



Bean curd sheet sweet
soup with ginkgo nuts

Test Parameters

■ Pathogens

Salmonella, *Staphylococcus*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Bacillus cereus*, a total of 5 tests.



Test Results of Chilled Ready-to-eat Desserts (Partial)

Sample Name	Test parameters	Test Result
Sago sweet soup with coconut milk	<i>Salmonella</i> , <i>Staphylococcus</i> , <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> , <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> and <i>Bacillus cereus</i>	Satisfactory
Red bean sweet soup with taro		Satisfactory
Sesame sweet soup		Satisfactory
Mango sago dessert with pomelo		Satisfactory
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Test Results

- All the samples were satisfactory.
- Some of the ready-to-eat desserts are high in sugar, the public should maintain a balanced diet, and consume moderate amount of ready-to-eat desserts.

Reference:

Macao "Microbiological Guidelines for Ready-to-eat Food" (GL 009 CSA 2015).

Advice To The Public

When purchasing ready-to-eat desserts:

- Purchase from reputable and reliable sources;
- Consume as soon as possible after purchasing;
- Store ready-to-eat desserts in refrigerator if they are not to be consumed immediately;
- When purchasing food online, it is not easy to verify whether appropriate measures have been put in place during storage, transport, etc. to ensure food safety. The public should pay special attention to the nature and potential risks associated with the food items that they intend to purchase online;
- Do not purchase or eat any food if in doubt about its safety or quality.

Advice to The Trade

- The trade should purchase food products from reliable suppliers; plan the demand of food ingredients for preparing desserts to avoid over-preparation; cooked sweet food that is going to be served cold should be cooled as quickly as possible, properly covered with cling film or stored in lidded containers and kept refrigerated;
- The trade should **keep the purchase and sales records or relevant invoices** for product tracing by the competent government authorities whenever necessary. Do not purchase or sell any food if in doubt about its safety or quality, e.g. food with abnormal smell, products have gone mouldy, etc.;
- In addition, IACM has published **[“Hygiene Guidelines on Production of Sweet Food”](#)** to remind the food trade about the food hygiene and safety issues they should pay attention to in the production and display of sweet food.

Released Results and Enquiries

The Centre releases food surveillance results and information through the following channels:

- Press releases;
- Food Safety Information website and Food Safety Information App.





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