

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)109

Question Serial No.

2344

Head: 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Please inform this Committee of:

- (a) the number of reported cases regarding food unfit for human consumption, as well as the number of warnings issued and prosecutions instituted in each of the past three years (i.e. in 2009, 2010 and 2011); and
- (b) the number of complaints received regarding the labelling of genetically modified food, nutrition information and prepackaged food over the past three years.

Asked by: Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) conducts a Food Surveillance Programme to ascertain whether foods for sale in Hong Kong are fit for human consumption, having regard to the legal requirements on food safety under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) and its subsidiary legislation. Samples are collected at import, wholesale and retail levels for microbiological and chemical testing. Every year, CFS takes about 65 000 samples for testing, with the satisfaction rate being over 99% in the last three years. Apart from the Food Surveillance Programme, CFS also investigates food complaints received. The number of food complaints and cases established as caused by foods which are found to be unfit for human consumption as well as the number of warnings issued and prosecutions instituted over the past three years is as follows -

	2009	2010	2011
No. of food complaints	4 227	3 737	4 265
No. of cases established as caused by food unfit for human consumption	1	3	1
No. of warnings issued on sale of food unfit for human consumption	0	0	0
No. of prosecutions made on sale of food unfit for human consumption	1	3	1

- (b) The Department had not received any complaints against labelling of genetically modified food over the past three years.

The Department had received the following number of complaints against labelling of prepackaged foods (general food labelling and nutrition labelling) as laid down in the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) over the past three years -

	2009	2010	2011
General Food Labelling ^{Note 1}	225	146	175
Nutrition Labelling ^{Note 2}	2	30	33

Note 1 : In terms of general food labelling, prepackaged foods are required to be legibly marked or labelled with the following information in either English or Chinese language or in both languages, namely:(i) name of food, (ii) list of ingredients including allergen declaration, (iii) indication of “best before” or “use by” date, (iv) statement of special condition for storage or instructions for use, (v) name and address of manufacturer or packer, and (vi) count, weight or volume.

Note 2 : In terms of nutrition labelling, the Nutrition Labelling Scheme requires all prepackaged foods to label the content of energy plus seven nutrients, namely: (i) protein, (ii) carbohydrates, (iii) total fat, (iv) saturated fat, (v) trans fat, (vi) sodium and (vii) sugars, as well as any nutrient for which a claim is made, and regulates nutrition claims.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Clement LEUNG

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 1.3.2012