

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION****FHB(FE)140**

Question Serial No.

2621

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:

Under this programme, it is mentioned the number of food complaints handled by the Department in 2011 was 4 265, which was higher than the corresponding figure of 3 737 in 2010. Please advise on the following:

- the type and nature of food complaints handled in the past three years (i.e. in 2009, 2010 and 2011), as well as the examination results and outcomes of these complaints;
- whether the Department has assessed the reason(s) for the significant increase in the number of food complaints; and
- in view of the rising number of food complaints, whether additional manpower and resources will be deployed or special measures be taken to handle the complaints.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows -

- The number of food complaints handled by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department from 2009 to 2011 with breakdown by nature and follow up actions is provided in the following table -

<b>Nature of Complaints</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Unwholesome food	2 115	2 059	2152
Foreign substances in food	1 127	1 018	1 017
Chemicals in food	558	393	647
Labelling issues	227	176	208
Fake/counterfeit food	160	53	167
Others	40	38	74
<b>Total number of cases</b>	<b>4 227</b>	<b>3 737</b>	<b>4 265</b>
<b>Number of warnings issued</b>	<b>1 027</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>774</b>
<b>Number of prosecutions taken out</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>132</b>

- The increase in the number of food complaints in 2011 from 2010 was attributed to the occurrence of a number of food incidents in 2011, including the contamination of German eggs by dioxin in January; radiation contamination of imported food from Japan due to the Fukushima Nuclear Plant incident in March; plasticiser contamination in Taiwanese food in May and reports of faked egg/faked beef in January/May.

- (c) As the estimated number of food complaints in 2012 is similar to the number of food complaints in 2011, the manpower and resources provided for handling food complaints will remain the same.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Name in block letters Clement LEUNG  
Post Title Director of  
Food and Environmental Hygiene  
Date 29.2.2012