

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

FHB(FE)120

Question Serial No.

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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:

Regarding the wholesale of live pigs, please advise this Committee on the following:

- (a) the number of live pigs supplied to Hong Kong in each of the past three years (i.e. from 2010-11 to 2012-13), the total expenditure and average expenditure per pig by the Government in handling live pigs supplied to Hong Kong (such as the arrangements for slaughterhouses, quarantine management, etc), as well as the manpower involved;
- (b) the monthly average price of live pigs supplied to Hong Kong in each of the past three years (i.e. from 2010-11 to 2012-13); and
- (c) the details of policy measures implemented recently for maintaining a stable supply of live pigs, as well as the expenditure and manpower involved.

Asked by: Hon. HO Chun-yin, Steven

Reply:

- (a) In 2010, 2011 and 2012, the total number of live pigs admitted to the slaughterhouses for slaughtering is 1 719 091, 1 557 170 and 1 638 233 respectively. The expenditure on live food animals inspection in the slaughterhouses in 2010-11 and 2011-12 is \$24.2 million and \$24.9 million respectively and the estimated expenditure in 2012-13 is \$30.1 million involving 85 staff posts in each of these three years. Pigs, cattle and goats are slaughtered in the slaughterhouses. The average expenditure of live animal inspection on each live food animal slaughtered is \$13.7, \$15.6 and \$18.0 in the same period. The cost for handling live pigs cannot be separately identified.
- (b) Average monthly auction price per picul of live pigs imported from the Mainland in 2010 to 2012 was -

Year	Average monthly auction price per picul of live pigs imported from the Mainland (HK\$)
2010	1,061
2011	1,482
2012	1,329

- (c) The policy objective of the Government is to maintain stable supply of various foodstuffs and to ensure food safety. At present, over 90% of live pigs supplied in Hong Kong are imported from the Mainland. To ensure a stable supply of live pigs, the Government has maintained close liaison with relevant Mainland authorities and the import agents of live pigs. In July 2007, after discussion between the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) and the Ministry of Commerce, the live pig market was opened up to foster competition. In October 2007, the number of wholesale import agents for live pig supplied to Hong Kong from the Mainland increased to three from one. To enhance market transparency and efficiency, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has made available on their website information on the number and average auction price of live pigs imported from the Mainland everyday for reference by the trade and the public. The Government will continue to monitor the supply of live pigs and maintained dialogue with the trade and relevant Mainland authorities with a view to securing stable supply of live pigs as far as possible.

Formulation of policy relating to the live pig market is the responsibility of FHB, which does not keep separate breakdown for the expenditure and manpower for such work.

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