

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-FHB(FE)09

Question Serial No.

SV065

Head: 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene 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:

Pursuant to reply no. FHB(FE)098, the Administration is requested to provide information on whether and what measures would be implemented (such as development of rapid food tests) to improve the safety control and monitoring of imported food from the Mainland.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Pik-wan, Helena

Reply:

The Government is committed to enhancing food safety through a multi-pronged approach. It adopts the "from farm to table" strategy to safeguard public health by ensuring that food consumed by the public meets safety standards.

All live food animals and freshwater fish, and chilled or frozen meat or poultry imported from the Mainland must come from registered farms and processing plants recognised by the State General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine, and be accompanied with official health certificates issued by the Mainland authorities. Other than carrying out inspections of these farms and processing plants, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) inspects live food animals, meat and poultry upon arrival at the boundary control points, and verifies the import documents including health certificates. CFS takes samples from each consignment of live poultry for avian influenza testing. Other imported livestock including pigs, cattle and goats have to pass drug residues testing, ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections at the slaughterhouses before they are supplied to local retail outlets.

All vegetables supplied to Hong Kong must also come from registered vegetable farms and production and processing establishments under the supervision of the relevant Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau. Other than conducting inspection of vegetable farms, CFS checks the documents accompanying the vegetable consignments, inspects the vegetables and takes samples for tests at the boundary control point.

In addition, CFS takes food samples at the import, wholesale and retail levels under its Food Surveillance Programme, to ensure that food on sale complies with the relevant legislation and is fit for human consumption. About 65 000 samples were tested in 2012. The overall satisfaction rate was 99.8%.

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