

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0876)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health
Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health
This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume I Page 249 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 14):

With regard to inspection of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong, the number of farms inspected dropped from 75 in 2012 (Actual) to only 70 in 2013 (Actual), and the number for 2014 (Estimate) will only be 65. Please provide information on the following:

- (a) the Department's expenditure and manpower involved in conducting inspections of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong;
- (b) the reasons for the decrease in the number of farms inspected by the Department in recent years; and
- (c) in view of the increasing severity of diseases linked to food animals in recent years, whether the Department has given thought to increasing the number of farms to be inspected and extending the scope of inspection.

Asked by: Hon. HO Chun-yin, Steven

Reply:

- (a) An inspection unit comprising three veterinary officers, eight field officers and one fisheries officer is responsible for inspection of food animal farms outside Hong Kong. The estimated expenditure on Mainland and overseas food animal farm inspections in 2013-14 and 2014-15 is about \$8.6 million and \$9.5 million respectively.
- (b) A plan for inspecting farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong is drawn up every year using a risk-based approach. The plan is subject to adjustment taking into account the actual circumstances that transpire in the course of time. In 2012 and 2013, while the planned number of such farm inspections was 50 and 65 respectively, the actual number of inspections conducted was higher, at 75 and 70 respectively. In 2014, we keep the planned number of farm inspection at 65 as in 2013.
- (c) The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department would remain vigilant and continue to closely liaise with the relevant authorities of our trading partners to take appropriate measures to protect food safety and public health as necessary.