

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)114

(Question Serial No. 0881)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health
(4) Public Education and Community Involvement

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 248 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 19):

All prepackaged foods in Hong Kong must comply with the general food labelling and nutrition labelling requirements as laid down in the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W). In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- (a) the estimated expenditure on and manpower for promotional activities, inspection and enforcement in respect of the food labelling and nutrition labelling requirements in 2014-15;
- (b) the number of enquiries received relating to the food labelling and nutrition labelling requirements since the requirements came into force; and
- (c) the number of inspections conducted, and the number and nature of non-compliance cases detected since the food labelling and nutrition labelling requirements came into force.

Asked by: Hon. HO Chun-yin, Steven

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The estimated manpower provision for inspection and enforcement of the general food labelling and nutrition labelling requirements in 2014-15 is 12, while that for promoting the Nutrition Labelling Scheme in 2014-15 cannot be separately identified. The expenditure of these activities will be absorbed from within existing resources for safeguarding food safety in general and cannot be separately identified.
- (b) Since the commencement of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme on 1 July 2010, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has received, as at 31 December 2013, 2 543 enquiries on nutrition labelling and 1 403 enquiries on general food labelling.

- (c) Since the commencement of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme on 1 July 2010, CFS has checked, as at 31 December 2013, 29 207 nutrition labels of prepackaged food products, with 364 found to be non-compliant. A detailed breakdown of the 364 cases is as follows –

Nature of non-compliance	No. of cases for the period of 1.7.2010 – 31.12.2013
No nutrition label or incomplete 1+7 core nutrients label	97
Inappropriate nutrition label format	11
Inappropriate nutrient claim	39
Inappropriate language	24
Involved more than one type of the above mentioned irregularities	18
Discrepancy on declared nutrient value confirmed after chemical analysis	175
Total	364

During the same period, CFS had checked 185 624 labels of prepackaged food products for general food labelling requirements, with 288 found to be non-compliant. A detailed breakdown of the 288 cases is as follows -

Nature of non-compliance	No. of cases for the period of 1.7.2010 – 31.12.2013
Blank label	11
Beyond expiry date	13
Improper indication of durability	27
Ingredient not properly listed	77
Incomplete manufacturer/packer's name and address	27
Food name and list of ingredients not marked in both English and Chinese where both languages are used on the label	42
Involved more than one type of the above mentioned irregularities	91
Total	288