

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****FHB(FE)141****(Question Serial No. 1576)**

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. 13):

In 2014-2015, the Food and Health Bureau will continue to collaborate with the Mainland authorities to apply information technology in enhancing the traceability of food. Regarding the development of the chilled meat and poultry trade in recent years, please provide information on the following:

- the average daily quantities of fresh, chilled and frozen chickens, ducks, geese, beef, pork and other kinds of meat (by kilogram and number) imported from the Mainland into Hong Kong from 2009 to 2013 and their respective share of the same type of import from the Mainland (set out by year in tabular form);
- the percentage of the average monthly quantity of imported chilled meat and poultry to the quantity of imported meat and poultry of the same kind from places other than the Mainland;
- the expenditure involved in exploring the feasibility of applying information technology to enhance the traceability of food, and the details of the work; and
- given that the consumption of chilled meat and poultry will become a prevailing trend in the face of the ongoing threat of avian influenza in recent years, chilled meat and poultry available in Hong Kong are of varied qualities as there is no venue for quality control, and it is difficult to trace the source in the event of a food safety incident, whether the Department has explored the need of setting up a quality control centre to enhance the traceability of food for safeguarding public health; if yes, the findings; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon. TIEN Puk-sun, Michael

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- The average daily quantities of fresh, chilled and frozen chicken, duck, goose, beef and pork imported from the Mainland from 2009 to 2013, and their share of the total import of each type from the Mainland are as follows:

Chicken

|             | Fresh Chicken                  |       | Chilled Chicken   |        | Frozen Chicken    |        |
|-------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) <sup>1</sup> | %     | Quantity (tonnes) | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 13.12                          | 4.73% | 117.47            | 42.37% | 146.67            | 52.90% |

|             |       |       |        |        |        |        |
|-------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>2010</b> | 13.66 | 4.28% | 129.00 | 40.46% | 176.21 | 55.26% |
| <b>2011</b> | 12.78 | 4.09% | 115.97 | 37.14% | 183.55 | 58.77% |
| <b>2012</b> | 12.55 | 4.77% | 103.69 | 39.36% | 147.17 | 55.87% |
| <b>2013</b> | 11.73 | 4.38% | 102.84 | 38.40% | 153.27 | 57.22% |

#### Duck

|             | Fresh Duck        |    | Chilled Duck      |        | Frozen Duck       |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 59.58             | 90.92% | 5.95              | 9.08%  |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 54.74             | 90.46% | 5.77              | 9.54%  |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 55.58             | 88.45% | 7.26              | 11.55% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 55.64             | 86.09% | 8.99              | 13.91% |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 55.77             | 84.76% | 10.03             | 15.24% |

#### Goose

|             | Fresh Goose       |    | Chilled Goose     |        | Frozen Goose      |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 33.06             | 99.46% | 0.18              | 0.54%  |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 36.70             | 97.89% | 0.79              | 2.11%  |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 27.78             | 87.97% | 3.80              | 12.03% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 30.74             | 99.39% | 0.19              | 0.61%  |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 29.43             | 98.82% | 0.35              | 1.18%  |

#### Beef

|             | Fresh Beef                     |        | Chilled Beef      |       | Frozen Beef       |        |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) <sup>2</sup> | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %     | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 23.21                          | 50.39% | 0                 | 0%    | 22.85             | 49.61% |
| <b>2010</b> | 22.78                          | 48.67% | 0.02              | 0.04% | 24.01             | 51.29% |
| <b>2011</b> | 23.36                          | 43.75% | 0.44              | 0.82% | 29.60             | 55.43% |
| <b>2012</b> | 21.18                          | 53.47% | 0.04              | 0.10% | 18.39             | 46.43% |
| <b>2013</b> | 17.32                          | 79.01% | 0.09              | 0.41% | 4.51              | 20.58% |

#### Pork

|             | Fresh Pork                     |        | Chilled Pork      |       | Frozen Pork       |        |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) <sup>2</sup> | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %     | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 301.10                         | 60.98% | 43.80             | 8.87% | 148.86            | 30.15% |
| <b>2010</b> | 307.33                         | 58.17% | 39.50             | 7.48% | 181.48            | 34.35% |
| <b>2011</b> | 320.92                         | 65.67% | 40.46             | 8.28% | 127.31            | 26.05% |
| <b>2012</b> | 337.70                         | 70.52% | 30.92             | 6.46% | 110.24            | 23.02% |
| <b>2013</b> | 345.38                         | 70.24% | 24.97             | 5.08% | 121.33            | 24.68% |

Remarks

<sup>1</sup> Converted by multiplying the number of imported chicken by their average weight

<sup>2</sup> Slaughtered carcass weight

- b) According to the Hong Kong Merchandise Trade Statistics, the monthly average quantities and percentage of chicken, duck, goose, beef and pork imported from places other than the Mainland from 2009 to 2013 are as follows:

Chicken

|             | Fresh Chicken     |    | Chilled Chicken   |        | Frozen Chicken    |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 32.25             | 1.00%  | 3,205.33          | 99.00% |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 35.67             | 1.36%  | 2,585.00          | 98.64% |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 35.75             | 0.64%  | 5,525.42          | 99.36% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 31.00             | 1.53%  | 1,998.25          | 98.47% |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 41.17             | 11.23% | 325.58            | 88.77% |

Duck

|             | Fresh Duck        |    | Chilled Duck      |        | Frozen Duck       |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %      | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 0.42              | 1.65%  | 25.00             | 98.35% |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 0.67              | 1.64%  | 40.08             | 98.36% |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 0.83              | 2.52%  | 32.08             | 97.48% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 0.67              | 4.44%  | 14.42             | 95.56% |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 8.58              | 66.00% | 4.42              | 34.00% |

Goose

|             | Fresh Goose       |    | Chilled Goose     |       | Frozen Goose      |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %     | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 1.58              | 1.25% | 125.08            | 98.75% |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 0.08              | 0.07% | 111.17            | 99.93% |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 1.08              | 1.03% | 104.08            | 98.97% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 0.33              | 0.39% | 84.42             | 99.61% |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 1.42              | 1.32% | 105.83            | 98.68% |

Beef

|             | Fresh Beef        |    | Chilled Beef      |       | Frozen Beef       |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %     | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 384.50            | 5.23% | 6,973.50          | 94.77% |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 461.00            | 6.57% | 6,559.33          | 93.43% |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 431.50            | 7.97% | 4,984.42          | 92.03% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 452.92            | 4.57% | 9,449.00          | 95.43% |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 524.08            | 2.50% | 20,418.58         | 97.50% |

## Pork

|             | Fresh Pork        |    | Chilled Pork      |       | Frozen Pork       |        |
|-------------|-------------------|----|-------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|
|             | Quantity (tonnes) | %  | Quantity (tonnes) | %     | Quantity (tonnes) | %      |
| <b>2009</b> | 0                 | 0% | 57.58             | 0.66% | 8,727.58          | 99.34% |
| <b>2010</b> | 0                 | 0% | 33.83             | 0.63% | 5,338.17          | 99.37% |
| <b>2011</b> | 0                 | 0% | 55.67             | 0.57% | 9,773.00          | 99.43% |
| <b>2012</b> | 0                 | 0% | 27.67             | 0.28% | 9,977.25          | 99.72% |
| <b>2013</b> | 0                 | 0% | 39.25             | 0.57% | 6,847.00          | 99.43% |

- c) The Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) trial programme is an on-going collaborative study with the Mainland authorities involving the application of RFID technology for tracking live pigs and cattle supplied to Hong Kong from Guangdong.

In 2013, we in cooperation with the Mainland authorities implemented further enhancement to the programme, including improvement of the hand-held and passageway reader systems and development of an alert system. We also extended the application of RFID technology to the tracking of live cattle supplied to Hong Kong from Guangdong starting from April 2013. We would evaluate the progress and consider the next steps in consultation with the Mainland authorities in due course.

The estimated expenditure to be incurred by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in this area of work in 2014-15 is \$1.78 million.

- d) Hong Kong imposes strict import control on high-risk foods like meat and poultry. The Centre for Food Safety enforces regulations under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) to ensure that food sold in Hong Kong is fit for human consumption. The Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) also requires food traders to keep record of business transactions so that the source of problem food can be traced in case of food incidents. There is no plan to set up a separate quality control centre for this purpose.