

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)149

(Question Serial No. 0930)

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 1 Page 250 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 7):

Regarding the introduction of a mandatory pre-market safety assessment scheme for genetically modified food, please advise when the scheme will take effect and when it will come to a close, as well as the expenditure to be involved.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Pik-wan, Helena

Reply:

To provide a mechanism to further enhance the food safety control over genetically modified (GM) food and provide the legal basis for preventing unauthorised GM products from entering the local market, the Government is considering regulating GM food by introducing a mandatory pre-market safety assessment scheme (PMSAS) in Hong Kong. Under the proposed scheme, a GM food developer who intends to place a GM food on the local market would be required to submit an application together with the necessary supporting documentation to Centre for Food Safety (CFS) for evaluation. CFS will determine whether the GM food developer has adequately addressed the safety issues based on Codex principles and guidelines. Food which consists of, or is derived from, GM microorganisms, plants and animals, must pass the safety assessment before it may be sold in Hong Kong. The Administration will embark on a public consultation before deciding on the details of PMSAS and its implementation timetable.