

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)228

(Question Serial No. 5179)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

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

Question:

- (1) Please advise on the total number of cases involving seizure of smuggled vegetables or meats by the Department in the past two years. With a breakdown by year, please advise on the types of vegetables/meats involved and their respective quantities, the number of prosecution cases, the number of convicted cases, and the penalties imposed. Please also advise on the quantity involved in the most serious smuggling case of this kind and the penalties imposed.
- (2) Please advise on the total number of vegetable/meat smuggling cases referred by the Customs and Excise Department to the Department in each of the past two years; whether the Department has taken follow-up actions (if yes, the specific details on the follow-up actions, and, with a breakdown by year, the types of vegetables/meats involved and their respective quantities, the number of prosecution cases, the number of convicted cases, and the penalties imposed; if not, the reason(s)).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth (Member Question No. 308)

Reply:

In 2013 and 2014, the Custom and Excise Department (C&ED) referred 402 and 337 cases of suspected smuggling of game, meat and poultry to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) respectively, including one and nine cases by sea cargo and 401 and 328 by travellers respectively. FEHD does not keep statistics on the quantities of the products involved in these referred cases. FEHD conducted investigation into all referred cases including checking for health certificates and ascertaining the source of meat. Details of the seized meat by types and quantities are tabulated below -

Year	Pork(kg)	Beef(kg)	Mutton(kg)	Poultry(kg)	Game(kg)	Total(kg)
2013	1 136	78	33	780	236	2 263
2014	844	140 115	48 644	25 113	54	214 770

In respect of the above cases, FEHD took out 269 and 142 prosecutions pursuant to the Imported Game, Meat and Poultry Regulations (Cap.132AK) in 2013 and 2014 respectively. The number of convicted cases in 2013 and 2014 were 154 and 101 respectively. The level of fines ranged from \$40 to \$10,000.

As for vegetable import, the Mainland is the major supplier of vegetables to Hong Kong. The Government and the Mainland authorities have established administrative arrangement under which vegetables supplied to Hong Kong must come from registered vegetable farms and production and processing establishments under the supervision of the relevant Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau. All fresh vegetables entering Hong Kong via the land route must be imported through Man Kam To Boundary Control Point (MKTBCP). The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) and C&ED have been working together closely to monitor implementation of the arrangement. The two departments conduct joint operations from time to time to inspect vehicles carrying vegetables at the MKTBCP. C&ED would refer any suspicious vehicles carrying vegetables via other control points to CFS. In February 2015, C&ED referred a total of nine cases of bringing a substantial amount of vegetables into Hong Kong detected at Lo Wu Control Point to CFS. CFS officers took immediate follow-up actions and conducted investigations accordingly, and the vegetables were voluntarily surrendered by the travellers for disposal. There was no vegetable smuggling case referred by C&ED to FEHD in 2013 and 2014.

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