

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-FHB(FE)06

(Question Serial No. S0083)

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

Question:

As set out in the reply under serial number FHB159, the number of food samples detected with unsatisfactory radiation level in 2013 and 2014 were 57 and 139 respectively. Please advise on the reason(s) for the substantial increase in the number of food samples detected with unsatisfactory radiation level. Meanwhile, with regard to recent media reports on the import of carrots by a local trader from the Chiba prefecture, i.e. one of the areas affected by the nuclear disaster, please advise whether the Department will step up the sampling of Japanese food; if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s). Please also advise whether the Department will review the existing criteria for the import of food products from the areas affected by the nuclear disaster; if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon MAK Mei-kuen, Alice (Member Question No.)

Reply:

The 57 and 139 unsatisfactory food samples found in 2013 and 2014 respectively were taken under the Centre for Food Safety's (CFS) routine food surveillance programme. None of these samples involved products with unsatisfactory radiation level. In addition to the samples taken under the food surveillance programme, another 56 382 and 61 459 samples were taken by CFS in 2013 and 2014 respectively from imported Japanese food for examination of radiation level. No unsatisfactory radiation level was detected on imported Japanese food in 2013 and 2014.

CFS will continue to adopt a risk-based approach in formulating strategies to monitor food imports from Japan, and will adjust the surveillance measures on Japanese food imports as necessary to ensure food safety and protect public health. In doing so, CFS will make reference to the test results of the Japanese authority and local surveillance, latest measures taken by other countries/places against food products imported from Japan, and recommendations made by international agencies including the World Health Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency on the issue.