

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-FHB(FE)07**

**(Question Serial No. S0089)**

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:

It is mentioned in the reply under serial number FHB157 that the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) is mindful of the cases where vegetables are brought into Hong Kong by travellers via the Lo Wu Control Point, and that in the past five years CFS had not intercepted any uninspected vegetables smuggled into Hong Kong through control points other than the Man Kam To Boundary Control Point. In this connection, please advise whether the enforcement actions have not been effective in curbing the smuggling of vegetables into Hong Kong in the name of self-consumption. Please also advise whether the Department will review the regulatory mechanism for the import of vegetables, including taking out prosecutions against persons bringing large quantities of vegetables into the territory, as a preventative measure against the import of vegetables with excessive pesticides; if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-hing (Member Question No. )

Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) is mindful of the cases where vegetables are brought, in the name of self-consumption, into Hong Kong by travellers via the Lo Wu Boundary Control Point (LWBCP). CFS maintains close liaison with the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) and exchanges intelligence on activities of importing vegetables through control points other than the Man Kam To Boundary Control Point (MKTBCP). To intercept such activities, C&ED and CFS conduct joint operations from time to time.

In 2015, special joint operations were conducted against passengers carrying substantial amount of vegetables into Hong Kong at LWBCP. During the operations, no evidence of sale could be found in the 15 travellers intercepted, and the vegetables were voluntarily surrendered by the travellers for disposal. Another two travellers were found to have delivered vegetables to two separate retailers for sale. On the basis of the evidence gathered, CFS will seek legal advice as to whether prosecution should be taken out against those involved in the two cases.

The CFS and C&ED will continue to work together closely to monitor implementation of the administrative arrangement with the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China to ensure vegetables supplied to Hong Kong come from registered farms and production and processing establishments through MKTBCP. The two departments will review the monitoring work from time to time and adjust their work as necessary to ensure the integrity of the administrative arrangement.

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