

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-FHB(FE)12

(Question Serial No. S0128)

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:

1. This is a follow-up question on the replies under serial numbers FHB(FE)160 and FHB(FE)108 (question serial numbers 3049 and 0015).

With regard to the inspection of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong, it is indicated in the Estimate of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) that the number of inspections in 2014 was 49 with an actual expenditure of \$8.5 million, while the estimated number of inspections in 2015 is 60 with an expenditure of \$10.2 million. In other words, the average expenditure on each inspection is \$170,000. Furthermore, the reply under serial number FHB(FE)108 reveals that the inspections were conducted at places as far as Chile, European countries, the United States, and even Iceland. Please provide additional information on the following, including:

- (a) the manpower for each inspection conducted outside Hong Kong;
- (b) the average expenditures on conducting inspections of farms on the Mainland and in overseas countries respectively; and
- (c) whether the advice given by the Department to the farms inspected has any binding effect; if not, whether any assessment has been made on the necessity of conducting such inspections.

Asked by: Hon WONG Pik-wan, Helena (Member Question No.)

Reply:

- (a) An inspection unit comprising three veterinary officers, eight field officers and one fisheries officer is responsible for inspection of food animal farms (including fish farms) outside Hong Kong, including the Mainland and overseas. Normally, a team of at least two staff would conduct a farm inspection.
- (b) We do not keep separate breakdown on the resources used for inspection in the Mainland and inspection conducted overseas.

- (c) Where irregularities are observed in an inspection, the Centre for Food Supply (CFS) would provide recommendations to the relevant authority outside Hong Kong. Normally, the authority will ensure that the irregularities are rectified and notify CFS when the required actions have been taken. The inspection plan is reviewed and adjusted from time to time based on risk assessment and inspection findings.

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