

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)093

(Question Serial No. 0147)

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:

Under Programme (1), it is stated that the number of samples taken from imported Japanese food for examination of radiation level in connection with the Japan nuclear power plant incident in March 2011 was 61 459 in 2014, whereas it was 72 549 in 2015. Please provide information on the manpower and expenditure involved in the past two years for the testings mentioned above; the number of unsatisfactory food samples detected and the number of samples of imported Japanese food detected with unsatisfactory radiation level in 2014 and 2015 respectively; as well as the number of imported Japanese food products with excessive radiation that entered the market, the types of food involved, and the number of people who unknowingly purchased such imported Japanese food items, in each of the past three years. Please also advise on the estimated number of imported Japanese food samples to be taken for radiation testing, as well as the manpower and expenditure involved, in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen (Member Question No. 14)

Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety's (CFS) Food Surveillance Programme (Programme) takes food samples, including Japanese food, at the import, wholesale and retail levels. Specifically, samples of Japanese food for radiation level testing are taken by two teams of staff in CFS, namely the Food Surveillance and Complaint Section (FSCS) and the Food Import and Export Section (FIES).

The total expenditure on the FSCS, responsible for taking food samples (including Japanese food), at wholesale and retail levels, in 2014-15 was \$61.6 million. The revised estimate for 2015-16 was \$65.3 million, and the estimated expenditure for 2016-17 is \$71.1 million. The manpower establishment of this Section in 2014-15 was 115, remains unchanged in 2015-16 and will stay the same in 2016-17. CFS does not have separate breakdown on the expenditure and manpower in FSCS for taking Japanese food samples for examination of radiation levels.

The FIES is responsible for taking food samples (including Japanese food) for radiation level testing on the import front. The total expenditure of this Section in 2014-15 was \$147 million. The revised estimate for 2015-16 was \$152.6 million, and the estimated expenditure in 2016-17 is \$152.2 million. The manpower establishment of this Section in 2014-15 and 2015-16 were 266, and the estimated manpower for 2016-17 is 271. CFS does not have separate breakdown on the expenditure and manpower in FIES for taking Japanese food samples for examination of radiation levels.

No sample of imported Japanese food was detected with unsatisfactory radiation level in the past three years. The estimated number of samples to be taken from imported Japanese food for examination of radiation levels in 2016 is about 62 000.

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