

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)128

(Question Serial No. 0019)

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:

Please advise on the expenditure and manpower required in conducting inspections of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong over the past three years (i.e. 2015, 2016 and 2017), as well as the estimated amount required for 2018. What is/are the reason(s) for setting the targeted number of farms as 35 all the time? Is there any plan to increase this number?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 13)

Reply:

An inspection unit in the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) comprising 3 veterinary officers, 8 field officers and 1 fisheries officer is responsible for the inspection of food animal and fish farms outside Hong Kong. The actual expenditure was \$9.4 million and \$10.5 million for 2015-16 and 2016-17 respectively. The revised estimate of expenditure for 2017-18 is \$11.7 million and the provision for 2018-19 is estimated at \$13.5 million.

The target number of inspections of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong in the Controlling Officer's Report in the draft Estimates is set for budgetary purpose only. The CFS adopts a risk-based approach to identify the target farms for inspection, taking into account the volume and previous testing results of imports from the farms as well as relevant food incidents, if any. In other words, the actual number of farms inspected each year will depend on needs and circumstances, as reflected by 53 and 44 being the respective actual numbers of inspections conducted in 2016 and 2017.

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