

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)336

(Question Serial No. 3781)

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:

The Office of The Ombudsman published an investigation report on “Food and Environmental Hygiene Department’s System of Safety Control for Imported Fruits and Vegetables” on 13 November 2017. The Food and Health Bureau has briefed the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on its responses and follow-up actions to the Office’s recommendations. In this connection, please advise on the related measures and provide information such as the original expenditure, manpower and man-hours of outsourced workers involved in the projects, and the additional expenditure, manpower and man-hours of outsourced workers incurred after implementing the follow-up measures.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 79)

Reply:

In response to the direct investigation report on “Food and Environmental Hygiene Department’s System of Safety Control for Imported Fruits and Vegetables” (the Investigation Report) published by The Ombudsman in November 2017, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has instituted various follow-up measures. They include increasing the number of fruit samples collected at the Man Kam To Food Control Office, the Food Control Checkpoint in Kwai Chung Customhouse, importers’ warehouses and wholesale markets, issuing guidelines to ensure effective sampling of fruits and vegetables from the lorry compartments (including those placed deep inside) at Man Kam To, and maintaining close liaison with the Government Laboratory to make flexible arrangements to minimise the testing time.

Regarding the classification of “bean sprouts” and “lotus roots” as referred to in the Investigation Report, CFS will continue to keep in view the development of other economies regarding the implementation of the latest Codex standards, and consider whether and if so how such standards should be adopted locally.

The aforementioned work has been and will continue to be absorbed from within FEHD’s existing manpower and resources.

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