

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)376

(Question Serial No. 5261)

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:

- (a) The local fresh pork supply mainly comes from the Mainland. However, pork from the Mainland pig farms was detected with excessive antibiotics by overseas scientists. Hong Kong and the Mainland, moreover, do not prohibit the use of antibiotics in pig farming. Please advise this Committee of the Government's measures in checking and monitoring antibiotic use by pig farms on the Mainland, and the mechanism to follow up on the overuse of antibiotics by these farms.
- (b) Please advise the Committee of the number of inspections and investigations conducted by the Department at overseas and Mainland farms supplying meat to Hong Kong over the past 5 years. Has the Department kept record of the types of antibiotics purchased by these farms and collected detailed information on their application of antibiotics?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 719)

Reply:

- (a) Live pigs imported from the Mainland are supplied by farms registered with the relevant Mainland authorities, accompanied by official health certificates attesting that the pigs do not contain levels of specified antibiotics (including prohibited chemicals and controlled chemicals) that exceed the relevant limits under local legislation.

Upon admission to local slaughterhouses, live pigs from both local and Mainland farms are sampled for testing for chemicals regulated. Only pigs with samples tested negative for prohibited chemicals will be despatched for slaughtering. In the event that the test result of sample(s) from a consignment of pigs is confirmed positive, the whole consignment in question will be disposed of and public announcement will be made. The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) will also notify the Mainland authorities of the test results and take follow-up actions including stepping up surveillance of pigs further supplied by the concerned farm(s).

(b) While the Mainland is the only non-local source of supply of live pigs, Hong Kong imports meat (including pork) in chilled and frozen forms from many different places. Hong Kong laws impose the same requirements and standards regarding prohibited and regulated chemicals (including antibiotics) on meat and other foods of animal origin for sale in Hong Kong, irrespective of the places of origin of such products. Regulatory oversight of the farms of food animals outside Hong Kong territories is the responsibility of the relevant authorities of the exporting places. Nevertheless, with the consent of these regulatory authorities, CFS conducts audit inspections of food animal farms to check their compliance with good husbandry practice, including proper usage of antibiotics in food animals and the keeping of antibiotics records. The laws empower CFS to impose restrictions on the import and sale of food that is considered unfit for human consumption or in breach of other regulatory requirements. CFS adopts a risk-based approach to identify the target farms for inspection, and the number of inspections to the Mainland and overseas farms supplying food animals or meat to Hong Kong in the past 5 years is tabulated below –

Year	Mainland	Overseas
2013	70	9
2014	49	6
2015	51	4
2016	53	8
2017	44	11

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