

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**FHB(FE)405****(Question Serial No. 6145)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (1) Food Safety and Public HealthControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and HealthQuestion:

Please set out in tabular form the following information, with a breakdown by food type and place of origin, for the past 5 years:

- (1) the number of imported food samples tested;
- (2) the number of imported food samples which required a product recall, and the quantity of products recalled from the market; and
- (3) the shortest, longest and average time taken (in days) for conducting tests on samples of imported food involved in a product recall.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (LegCo internal reference no.: 68)Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department takes about 65 000 food samples each year at the import, wholesale and retail levels along a risk-based approach under its Food Surveillance Programme to safeguard food safety. CFS does not have breakdown on the numbers of locally produced and imported food samples. Breakdown of the numbers of samples tested over the past 5 years by food group is as follows -

Food group					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Vegetables, fruits and related products	26 600	29 700	30 800	29 900	29 500
Meat, poultry and related products	7 000	6 300	5 300	6 300	5 700
Aquatic products	6 700	5 800	5 600	5 900	5 500
Milk, milk products and frozen confections	8 200	7 900	9 500	9 800	10 000
Cereals, grains and related products	1 400	2 900	3 200	3 500	3 400
Others	14 100	11 700	11 100	11 800	11 900
Total	64 100	64 300	65 500	67 100	66 000

Note: Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

Food recall exercises may be initiated as a result of reports or complaints from various sources, including unsatisfactory testing results of food samples under CFS' regular Food Surveillance Programme, investigation results of food poisoning and complaint cases and notifications of food incidents by authorities of other economies.

From 2014 to 2018, there were a total of 35 samples under CFS' regular Food Surveillance Programme, including 3 of locally produced food and 32 of imported food, with unsatisfactory test results which led to the conduct of food recall exercises as required by CFS. The time taken for testing each of those samples varied and was about 12 days on average, depending on various factors including the complexity of the tests and the types of samples involved. The amounts of the implicated food products recalled from the market depend on various factors, such as whether the food traders had sold out all the products, the consumers had returned the products to the food traders, and the nature of the foods concerned. Insofar as those 32 unsatisfactory samples of imported food are concerned, their breakdown by food group and place of origin is as follows -

Food group	Number of samples (Place of origin)				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Vegetables, fruits and related products	1 (Mainland)	3 (Mainland; South Africa/ Chile/ United States)	1 (Taiwan)	1 (Taiwan)	1 (Mainland)
Meat, poultry and related products	-	-	-	-	-
Aquatic products	6 (Japan; Taiwan; Vietnam)	1 (New Zealand)	2 (Indian Ocean / Vietnam; Mainland)	2 (United Kingdom)	2 (Italy)
Milk, milk products and frozen confections	1 (Australia)	2 (Australia; New Zealand)	-	-	-
Cereals, grains and related products	-	1 (Japan)	-	1 (Mainland)	-
Others	3 (Germany; Korea; Taiwan)	-	-	3 (Australia; Indonesia; Netherlands)	1 (Egypt)

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