

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE)409**

**(Question Serial No. 6149)**

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:

With regard to nutrition labelling of food items, the Centre for Food Safety is requested to list the following information by year:

- (1) Has the Government conducted food samplings for the checking of irregularities in nutrition labelling over the past 5 years? Please provide tabulated information on the sample size, places of origin of the food items, food types and the test results.
- (2) Please provide the number of samplings/inspections conducted, cases of irregularities detected, summons issued, prosecutions instituted and cases convicted in each of the past 5 years, with a breakdown by retail outlet inspected.
- (3) Please provide the details of the Department's work plan on food samplings and inspections in relation to nutrition labelling. What are the estimated expenditure and manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (LegCo internal reference no.: 72)

Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has all along adopted a risk-based approach in checking the nutrition labels of prepackaged food products. The results from 2014 to 2018, with breakdown by nature of non-compliance and types of foods, are tabulated below -

	Number of cases					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Number of prepackaged food products checked	5 080	5 369	5 625	7 023	7 170	30 267
Number of non-compliant cases	96	29	54	34	62	275
<b>(a) Breakdown of non-compliant cases by nature of non-compliance</b>						
Nature of non-compliance	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
No nutrition label or incomplete labels on the energy content and seven core nutrients (i.e. “1 + 7” nutrition label)	19	17	18	8	19	81
Inappropriate nutrition label format	1	1	0	2	0	4
Inappropriate nutrient claim	2	0	0	1	2	5
Inappropriate language	3	0	2	4	6	15
Involving more than one type of the abovementioned irregularities	17	0	0	0	1	18
Discrepancy on declared nutrient value confirmed after chemical analysis	54	11	34	19	34	152
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>275</b>

<b>(b) Breakdown of non-compliant cases by types of foods</b>						
<b>Types of Foods</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bakery and cereal products	24	5	9	4	21	63
Candies and snacks	12	15	13	14	23	77
Drinks	15	1	7	2	2	27
Oils, sauces and condiments	18	2	12	10	9	51
Others	27	6	13	4	7	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>275</b>

(2) In 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, the CFS had checked 5 080, 5 369, 5 625, 7 023 and 7 170 nutrition labels of prepackaged food products respectively. A total of 275 non-complaint cases were detected. The CFS had initiated prosecution for 87 cases. 86 cases were convicted while 1 was withdrawn upon the advice of the Department of Justice (DoJ). Breakdown by year is as follows -

	<b>Number of prosecution cases</b>					
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of summons	5	17	19	18	28	87
Number of convictions	5	16*	19	18	28	86*

\* One case was withdrawn upon DoJ's advice.

(3) The CFS will continue to adopt a risk-based approach to take samples for nutrition label checking and chemical analysis. Non-compliant cases would be followed up and prosecution actions would be taken if there is sufficient evidence. The expenditure on enforcement of nutrition labelling requirements forms part of the expenditure on food surveillance and complaint handling, and cannot be separately identified. The estimated expenditure for food surveillance and complaint handling is \$78.2 million for 2019-20.

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