

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)096

(Question Serial No. 2815)

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:

After customs clearance followed by inspection at Man Kam To Animal Inspection Station, Mainland live pigs are admitted to Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse (SSSH) or Tsuen Wan Slaughterhouse (TWSH).

- (a) Please provide the organisation structures and staff establishments of SSSH and TWSH. What is the distribution of responsibilities between the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) at the 2 slaughterhouses?
- (b) Urine samples are collected for testing of chemical residues from each consignment of pigs admitted to the slaughterhouse. Please provide the total number of Mainland live pigs admitted to the slaughterhouses and the number of samples collected in each of the past 3 years with a breakdown by month.
- (c) Further to (b), please provide the corresponding number of local live pigs tested for chemical residues at the slaughterhouses.
- (d) What are the types of chemicals tested, the testing methods adopted, the time normally required for obtaining results of each test and the expenditure for conducting such tests (excluding staff cost) in each of the past 3 years?
- (e) How many urine samples collected from Mainland and local live pigs were tested positive in each of the past 3 years?
- (f) Mainland live pigs will undergo further inspection by veterinary surgeons to see if their condition, behaviour and actions are normal so as to screen out suspected diseased or injured pigs. In this regard, please provide the number of these suspected diseased or injured pigs in the past 3 years with a breakdown by month.
- (g) Further to (f), please provide the corresponding number of local live pigs.

- (h) How many samples were taken from SSSH and TWSH to the AFCD laboratory for testing each month over the past 3 years? Is there any record of the figures? If no, what are the reasons and will the Department consider maintaining such record?
- (i) Please provide the number of dead pigs found in SSSH and TWSH each month over the past 3 years.
- (j) Has the Department made any comparison between the management and quarantine procedures of local slaughterhouses and those of similar facilities in foreign countries? Have any experts been engaged to review the standard in this respect?

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick (LegCo internal reference no.: 2035)

Reply:

- (a) The work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in the 2 licensed slaughterhouses (Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse (SSSH) and Tsuen Wan Slaughterhouse (TWSH)) mainly include inspecting the health condition of live food animals and providing meat inspection services. To ensure that meat supplied to the market is fit for consumption, all imported and local food animals have to undergo stringent ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections in the slaughterhouses. The veterinary officers and field officers of the Slaughterhouse (Veterinary) Section of the Department are responsible for monitoring the health condition of food animals, sample collection for testing of agricultural chemical and veterinary drug residues, performing ante-mortem inspections, providing professional support for meat inspection and collecting food animal samples for disease surveillance. The staff establishment of the slaughterhouses was 92 in 2019-20. The health inspectors of the Department's Meat Inspection Unit are mainly responsible for performing post-mortem inspections. The establishment of the unit was 52 in 2019-20.
- (b)&(c) The number of live pigs admitted to the slaughterhouses and the number of pig urine samples collected for testing agricultural chemical and veterinary drug residues in the past 3 years are as follows:

	2017		2018		2019	
	Local	Mainland	Local	Mainland	Local	Mainland
Number of live pigs admitted to the slaughterhouses	104 248	1 455 379	105 981	1 468 150	109 260	843 421
Number of pig urine samples collected for testing agricultural chemical and veterinary drug residues	13 509	31 392	13 797	30 506	15 870	14 147

- (d) At present, routine tests of urine samples of pigs are carried out by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). Prohibited and restricted chemicals such as antibiotics, beta-agonists, hormones and anti-parasitic agents are tested. The testing methods adopted are enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), radioimmunoassay (RIA) and high performance liquid chromatography with tandem mass spectrometer. The time for obtaining test results varies depending on the types of chemicals tested and the testing methods adopted. In 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20, the expenditure incurred by AFCD for conducting such tests were \$9.94 million, \$10.47 million and \$9.51 million respectively.
- (e) In the past 3 years, only 1 urine sample taken in 2017 was tested positive for prohibited chemicals.
- (f)&(g) The number of Mainland pigs and local pigs which were screened out as suspected diseased or injured pigs after inspection in slaughterhouses in the past 3 years is as follows:

	2017	2018	2019
Mainland pigs	321	203	30
Local pigs	2	3	3

- (h) The number of samples taken from SSSH and TWSH to AFCD's veterinary laboratory for disease surveillance in each of the past 3 years was 2 770, 3 830 and 4 110 respectively.
- (i) The number of dead pigs found in SSSH and TWSH over the past 3 years is as follows:

	Monthly average number of dead pigs	
	SSSH	TWSH
2017	86	8

2018	76	6
2019	31	2

- (j) The management and operation of slaughterhouses are undertaken by licensees while the Department is responsible for examining the health of live food animals as well as the supervision, inspection and enforcement of meat hygiene. Qualified and specialised staff are stationed at the licensed slaughterhouses to carry out stringent ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections and monitor the operation of slaughterhouses to ensure good hygiene practices. The Department also liaises with overseas controlling authorities and keeps in view the development of the management, quarantine and hygiene of slaughterhouses in other countries so as to improve the service quality of local slaughterhouses.

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