

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****EEB(F)131****(Question Serial No. 1442)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (1) Food Safety and Public HealthControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Ms Irene YOUNG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Decreases were recorded in a number of indicators set by the Department, including “food complaints handled”, “applications for permission to import game, meat and poultry”, “veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products issued”, “no. of rodent trappings”, etc. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- a) the reason(s) for the rather significant decreases recorded; and
- b) whether the Department has measure(s) in place to improve the situation.

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)Reply:

The specific figures under the above indicators are as follows:

<b>Work item</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Food complaints handled	5 260	4 834
Applications for permission to import game, meat and poultry	718	549
Veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products issued	1 521	1 419
No. of rodent trappings	86 164	78 148

Regarding food complaints handled, the relevant figures show that there were decreases in the numbers of complaints in relation to feeling unwell after consumption, food spoilage and food labelling received by the Department in 2022, resulting in a slight drop in the total number of complaints.

Regarding the applications for import permissions, as the Centre for Food Safety of the Department has extended the validity period of the import permissions for meat and poultry

from 6 months to 12 months since March 2020, the number of applications needed to be submitted decreased accordingly.

When exporters need to meet relevant veterinary health requirements for exporting Hong Kong food products containing ingredients of animal origin to other countries/places, they may apply to the Department for veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products. The relevant figures reflect a slight decrease in the number of applications in recent 2 years.

With regard to the rodent prevention and control work, the rodent trapping methods and tools to be used by the Department vary according to factors such as the severity of rodent infestation and the actual scope of the problem in different locations. Although the number of rodent trappings in 2022 (78 148) was lower than that in 2021 (86 164) by about 9%, the effectiveness of the trapping work for the same period has in fact increased substantially. In 2022, the total number of live rodents caught by the Department in public areas was 45 422, about 34% more than that in 2021 (33 846).

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