

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(F)064**

**(Question Serial No. 0933)**

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 (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated under Programme (1) that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to implement and trial new measures to enhance and sustain the effectiveness of its rodent control work, including continuing with the overnight rodent control operations and trial use of new rodent control technologies and tools, etc. In fact, some members of the public have still expressed that the situation has not yet improved after years of implementation of rodent control operations. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- 1) whether the situation of rodent blackspots has improved and the effectiveness of anti-rodent work in 2023-24; and
- 2) the expected effectiveness of the trial use of new rodent control technologies and tools by the Department in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

- 1) In 2023-24, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has put in place a series of targeted rodent prevention and control measures, which include strengthening overnight rodent control, continuing with the use of various rodent control technologies and tools, extending the trial scheme of allowing food premises to place large-size waste containers in rear lanes for temporary storage of waste, etc. The results of the measures are positive. In 2023, a total of around 63 300 live rodents were caught across the territory, around 40% more than that of 2022 (around 45 400). If the number of both live rodents and dead rodents was considered, a total of around 97 800 rodents were collected in 2023, around 30% more than that of 2022 (around 77 200). Strategic anti-rodent operations were conducted at a total of 108 priority rodent blackspots in all districts in 2023 and around 60% of them (70 in total) were eliminated, achieving the key performance indicator of reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots at least by half as set in the 2022 Policy Address.
- 2) The rodent control technologies and tools to be adopted by the Department in 2024-25 and their effectiveness are as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>
<b>Thermal imaging camera surveillance system</b>	The Department conducted trials on thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence analytical function in 2020 and found it effective in facilitating objective assessment of rodent infestation situation. The equipment has been widely employed in the strategic anti-rodent operations. Moreover, the Department has fully adopted thermal imaging cameras for conducting the Rodent Activity Survey as a replacement for the Rodent Infestation Survey from 2024 onwards to enhance rodent surveillance in districts and deploy more effective anti-rodent actions in blackspots.
<b>Placing poisonous baits in a T-shaped bait box</b>	The bait box was tested between October and November 2020. Test results showed that the T-shaped bait box was more effective than ordinary rectangular bait boxes in attracting rodents to enter and consume the baits. The equipment has been widely employed.
<b>Alcohol rodent trapping device</b>	The Department has conducted trials progressively on alcohol rodent trapping devices in public markets and refuse collection points since October 2022. The results are positive. The equipment will be used in suitable places as necessary.
<b>Glue trap</b>	The Department has tried out the application of glue traps in public markets with more serious rodent infestation as an additional measure for rodent disinfection since November 2022. Positive results have been achieved, and the rodent infestation problem in public markets has been alleviated effectively. The equipment will be used in suitable indoor venues, such as markets and refuse collection points, as necessary.

The Department will continue to conduct strategic anti-rodent operations against 97 priority rodent blackspots in 2024, in order to achieve the indicator, that is, to reduce the number of blackspots by 60% by end-2024 as set in the 2023 Policy Address.

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