

本函檔號 Our ref.: EFB 5/5/2
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26 April 2001

Mrs Constance LI
Clerk to LegCo Panel on
Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Central Hong Kong

Dear Mrs LI,

Supplementary Information Requested by LegCo Members

At the LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene meeting held on 23 March 2001, we undertook to take a number of follow-up actions during discussion of item IV (Food surveillance programme). I write to report on the actions we have taken-

List of retail network of chilled meat from Thailand

(paragraph 15 of the draft minutes of meeting)

Importers of chilled meat are required to provide information about their retail network to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. The Hon WONG Yung-kan asked for a set of such information. We have sought legal advice as to whether it is appropriate to release this information to LegCo members. The Department of Justice advised that this information cannot be released to the public since it is commercial information. However, if Members need this information for the sole purpose of making policy decisions, we will consider if it is possible to provide this information to Members as a confidential document on condition that it cannot be released to the public.

Results of analyses carried out to assess the truthfulness of food labels
(para. 21 of the draft minutes of meeting)

In 2000, 326 prepackaged food products were found to have contravened the labelling requirements under the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, Cap. 132.

The irregularities fall into the following categories –

- (a) the name or designation of the food products were not labelled properly;
- (b) the ingredients were not listed out as specified;
- (c) unclear indication of “best before” or “use by” date or sale of food beyond the “use by date”;
- (d) conditions for storage or instructions for use were not stated as required;
- (e) full information on the name and address of manufacturer or packer were not provided as required;
- (f) the count, weight or volume were not properly indicated; and
- (g) labels were not in the appropriate language

There were 87 prosecutions in 2000 for contravention of the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations.

I refer to paragraph 7 of the draft minutes. We are in the process of exploring measures to better regulate the storage and display of frozen meat for sale at retail outlets. We will report to the Panel once we are ready.

Yours sincerely,

(David LEUNG Chee-kay)
for Secretary for the Environment and Food