

## **Response to Concerns Raised by Members**

### **Reference to other places (including the Mainland) where live quail are sold with other poultry in markets**

We do not consider it appropriate to comment on arrangements in other places. In respect of the Mainland, both Professor Ken Shortridge and the Administration have responded to Members at the meeting of 13 November that the poultry markets in the Mainland and Hong Kong are different.

- In the Mainland, poultry are usually not left overnight in market premises, but there are always poultry stored in market premises overnight or even for more than one night in some cases in Hong Kong.
- Market premises in the Mainland are usually not located in multi-storey buildings.
- Cages of poultry in the Mainland markets need not be stacked up in multiple levels to save space.

### **Number of Animal Trader Licences issued by Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department**

As of 19 November, there are 270 Animal Trader Licences allowed for sale of quail.

### **Administration to consider granting ex-gratia allowance payment to quail farmers expeditiously irrespective of whether the Regulations will come into effect**

After the new Regulations have come into effect, the number of retail quail outlets and operators may decline due to the segregation requirement. Since the farmers may lose part of their market and encounter difficulties in continuing their business, the Administration proposes to offer ex-gratia allowance (EGA) payment to the farmers if they choose to wind up their business. If the new Regulations could not come into effect, live quail and other live poultry would not need to be segregated at all and the reason for granting the EGA payment to local farmers would not exist any more. Thus, the Administration would not grant EGA payment to the farmers if the new Regulations could not come into effect.

## **Response to Concerns Raised by Deputations**

We do not agree with the trades' estimated unemployment figures which

would be caused by the segregation policy. The trade deputations stated that the segregation requirements would result in the loss of employment of 12 individuals in quail farming, 30-40 in quail wholesaling and more than 100 in quail retailing. We do not agree with the estimation.

There are now 5 licensed quail farms in Hong Kong. Only three of them still rear quail in the recent months. None of these farms hire workers. Two of the farms are run by a couple and the remaining farm is managed by a farmer who handles all the farm work. Therefore, only the work of three farmers will be affected by the amendment Regulations.

At present, only two poultry wholesalers are regularly trading quail in addition to live chickens and other live poultry. For the one who trades a larger number of quail, the business volume of quail-trading is less than 10% of his total business turnover. Five other wholesalers also trade quail occasionally. The wholesale price per quail is now \$ 2.8.

About 270 fresh provision shops or market stalls selling live chickens also sell quail. The average number of quail sold by a retailer each day is about 40 and the retail price per quail is about \$4. This represents no more than 2% of the total business turnover of each fresh provision shop or market stall.

Since wholesalers and retailers are only trading quail as a sideline business, the segregation policy should not result in reduction of manpower.