

For discussion
on 1 February 2002

LEGCO PANEL ON FOOD SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE

**Lifting of Export Quota on Chilled Meat
for Supply to Hong Kong by the Mainland**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the follow-up actions taken by the Administration following the Mainland's notification of its abolition of the quota system governing chilled meat exports to Hong Kong, and the stringent control measures enforced by the Administration to ensure the hygiene standards of imported chilled meat.

BACKGROUND

2. Hong Kong, as a free market economy, has all along been adopting a free trade policy. No goods or commodities are subject to any import or export quota in the territory. Hence, Hong Kong people can enjoy greater choice. All foods are allowed to be imported as long as they meet and comply with our stringent hygiene requirements which are formulated with reference to international standards.

3. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) was notified on 17 December 2001 that, effective from 1 January 2002, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and

Economic Co-operation of the Mainland would no longer implement any export quota control over chilled chickens, pork or beef for supply to Hong Kong. The Ministry would also abolish the restriction in relation to the granting of export business operating right and the sole agency system. The notification did not mention the measures in a specific way, nor did it contain details of the implementation arrangements. We contacted the relevant departments on the Mainland right away to enquire about the details of the announcement. Coincidentally, a half-yearly routine meeting was held from 15 to 17 January 2002 between FEHD and the Mainland's inspection and quarantine departments for technical exchange on food control. We took the opportunity to explain to the Mainland representatives our hygiene requirements for imported meat. Both sides agreed to stay in touch, discuss and follow up on the specific implementation measures.

IMPORT CONTROL

4. To ensure food safety, we have put in place an effective mechanism for controlling the import of chilled meat. Under the Imported Game, Meat and Poultry Regulations of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap.132), all imported meat must be accompanied by an official health certificate issued by a competent authority recognised by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene. The official health certificate should certify that the chilled meat it accompanies is fit for human consumption. The risk-based control system follows international practices and standards, and is applicable to all imported meat, irrespective of the sources.

5. Whenever there is a new source of imported chilled meat, FEHD will assess the following information of the exporting territory before considering whether to allow the import of such meat in the form of trial shipments-

- (a) the legislation governing the hygiene standards of the meat;

- (b) the animal disease situation;
- (c) the training and qualifications of the veterinarians and quarantine inspection personnel (e.g. the Health Inspectors) and whether their qualifications are internationally recognised;
- (d) the facilities and hygiene standards of the farms where the livestock is raised;
- (e) the facilities and hygiene standards of the slaughterhouses;
- (f) the facilities (including storage and delivery facilities) and hygiene standards of the processing plants; and
- (g) the ante-mortem and post-mortem quarantine inspection procedures.

6. After going through the assessment procedures, FEHD will detain for examination the first three consignments of meat imported into Hong Kong on trial shipment. Such consignments can only be released to the market for sale after the testing results are confirmed satisfactory. If FEHD is satisfied with the first three consignments, each of the subsequent three consignments will be sampled for testing, although they can be released for sale before the final testing results are available. Subsequent consignments will be put under the regular food surveillance system if FEHD is satisfied with the test results of the first six consignments from the new source of import. Samples will be taken at the import, wholesale and retail levels for testing on a random basis under the food surveillance programme. If any of the testing results is found to be unsatisfactory, FEHD will ask the exporting territory's authorities to suspend shipment, to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the causes of the problem and then send the investigation report to FEHD. FEHD will

only allow imports of meat to resume when the exporting territory's authorities have identified and corrected the relevant problem to the satisfaction of FEHD.

CONTROL MEASURES AT RETAIL LEVEL

7. In June 2001, FEHD issued additional licensing requirements and conditions to all fresh provision shop (FPS) licensees and market stall operators permitted to sell fresh meat. FPSs and market stalls that sell chilled meat are required to provide suitable refrigerators for the storage or display of chilled meat for sale. The temperature inside the refrigerators should be kept at about 4 degree Celsius. The display, labelling and sale of chilled meat as fresh meat are forbidden. These requirements and conditions took effect on 24 September 2001.

8. FEHD has conducted inspections since the additional licensing requirements and conditions took effect. As at 14 December 2001, FEHD had issued 12 verbal warnings and 7 warning letters to FPS licensees and meat stall lessees for failure to comply with the new requirements and conditions. No breaches were found in the follow-up inspections. In addition to regular inspections, FEHD conducts blitz operations to check on the delivery ends according to the distributors' list supplied by importers. An unlicensed chilled meat distribution center has been uncovered since the new licensing conditions took effect, resulting in the prosecution of the operator.

THE WAY FORWARD

9. We will continue to rigorously enforce the control measures in respect of chilled meat to ensure food safety. As to the abolition by the Mainland of the export quota for chilled meat supplied to Hong Kong, we will continue to keep in touch with our Mainland counterparts and hold discussions with them on the detailed inspection

and quarantine arrangements, including arranging visits by our officers to the relevant registered farms and processing plants on the Mainland to understand more about their inspection and quarantine measures. Both sides have agreed that until the implementation details are properly worked out, there will be no import of such chilled meat from the Mainland.

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

January 2002

廣南指冰鮮新規未構成衝擊



廣南管理層左起李力、陳立忠和姜衛士

廣南集團(一〇三)表示，外經貿部(關於調整供港澳肉類產品出口管理)通知，對該公司主營業務沒有正面衝擊；至於取消供港澳活塘魚出口配額管理，暫未知影響有多大，該公司將視乎市場變化，開拓其他業務如凍肉和冰鮮肉的業務。陳立忠表示，外經貿部放寬內地冰鮮肉輸港，對該公司來說是機會與挑戰參半，新政策剛剛開始。

市場變化很大，是否要開展冰鮮和凍肉業務，要視乎市場因素。他說，該公司主營業務是鮮活商品，包括活雞、活豬和活牛進口，冰鮮肉不是主業，但在新政策下，該公司也將爭取作為冰鮮肉的代理商。

擬爭取成冰鮮代理商

至於未來冰鮮肉會否代替鮮活禽畜，常務副主席李力(圖左)不作預測，但他表示冰鮮肉不能「一刀切」代替活禽畜。他說，雖然在九五年提出以冰鮮雞代替活雞一直沒有實現。李力說，目前港粵兩地政府正就檢疫制度包括檢疫設施、農場衛生環境等各方面問題進行磋商，希望能找出共同標準，如生產、加工要有完善工序。李力說，該公司正在探討加強工場設施和工場環境的改造，提升管理設施，並留意市場變化，以調整業務。

其實，在外經貿部是次通知中，對該公司最直接影响是從今年一月一日開始取消供港澳活塘魚出口配額放行證管理。李力表示，供應

香港和澳門活塘魚主要有四種，包括鯪魚、鯪魚、大頭魚和鯪魚，目前該公司擁有百分之一代理權，並將力爭日後的全權代理活塘魚，但他沒有說明對該公司的實質衝擊。

此外，外經貿部表示，為確保供港鮮活商品質量，外經貿部決定以供港活雞為試點，加大對內地生產企業自營出口的扶持，擬把本年度配額總量的百分之十約三百三十萬隻用於專項扶持生產企業出口。

撤活塘魚配額管理影響直接

廣南集團董事總經理陳立忠(圖中)昨天在記者會表示，該公司現正向外經貿部爭取成為供港活雞試點，若成功將可以額外增多一些配額。目前該公司代理活雞市場佔有率達百分之八十五，本港活豬市場佔有率為百分之十六至百分之十八。

對於該公司近期高層人士變動，葉旭全已辭任董事及主席，由梁江接替。梁江現為廣東控股董事、粵海資產管理及廣聯控股董事長，他上任後將辭去後兩個職務。李力表示，人事變動是正常崗位調動，並說葉旭全仍將關注廣南的發展。

安排細節後才輸入冰鮮肉類

環境食物局局長任關佩英昨天表示，到目前為止，本港未有冰鮮肉類在內地新政策下輸入本港。

新政策的實施情況，港府將與內地有關部門同意繼續聯絡，在實行細節作出妥善安排後，才會輸入冰鮮肉類從內地入口香港。食物環境衛生署是於二〇

將會取消供港冰鮮肉類及活塘魚的配額管理，並取消冰鮮肉類的指定代理制度，但該署未收到任何執行細節和實施時間表。

〇一年十二月十七日得
到有關方面知會，內地

內地冰鮮肉檢妥方入港

食環署與國家檢疫總局洽商細節安排

任關佩英強調會與內地有關部門商定妥善安排後，才會開始讓內地冰鮮豬肉入口。



【本報訊】(記者何子成)對於內地已於本月一日開始取消供港冰鮮肉類及活塘魚的配額管理，特區環境食物局局長任關佩英昨日在記者會上指出：食物環境衛生署將與國家質量監督檢驗檢疫總局保持緊密聯繫，直到雙方就實行細節方面作出妥善的安排後，當局才會批准冰鮮肉類從內地進口香港。

她強調當局對輸入冰鮮肉類的衛生要求會十分嚴格，內地有關部門亦十分重視衛生要求，以確保香港市民能夠安全食用冰鮮肉類。

具體細節仍待磋商

由於具體細節仍有待磋商，故當局仍未有正式入口內地冰鮮肉類的時間表，但她認為有關措施相信需要一段頗長的時間才會正式落實。

任關佩英表示：當局計劃在內地有關部門的同意及協助下，派員前往內地的出口准許農場了解有關場地的衛生設施甚至餵飼動物的飼

料：視察加工場、屠宰場等設施，檢查是否有完善的衛生設備，以及有足夠的衛生水平。至於運送過程也會在視察之列，並會研究抽查的程序。

同時，雙方會研究實施時間表、及會在多少個省市先行開始實施、有多少內地農場或企業有興趣將冰鮮肉進口香港等。在香港方面，當局也會評估各部門在新安排下的人手安排等。

漁農署徵詢業界意見

對於業界關心新政策可能對他們做成的影響，任關佩英表示非常了解，並已要求漁農自然護理署與業界聯絡，聽取他們的意見，以便當局考慮如何協助他們適應當有冰鮮肉類入口香港時對他們可能產生的影響。

當局亦會研究如何保障消費者，以免在大量冰鮮豬肉入口後，有人會「魚目混珠」地將之充作新鮮豬肉出售。

港衛檢依據國際規定

她強調香港是一個自由市場，沒有任何入口的配額限制，在這種情況下，消費者能夠有更多的選擇。在進口食物方面，只要符合香港嚴格的、根據國際標準而制定的衛生規定，都可以進口香港。

她續說：食環署是在上月十七日得到內地有關方面知會是次放寬的決定，但當時並沒有任何的詳情，包括執行的細節及實施的時間表等。

所以食環署已第一時間向內地有關機構了解詳細情形，並利用於前日開始舉行之食環署及內地檢疫機構每半年舉行一次的例會。食環署代表已經向內地代表解釋香港在進口食物的嚴格衛生要求，而內地的代表亦表示理解這點，他們表示內地亦同樣注重出口食物的衛生標準。

文匯報

廣南伺機拓鮮凍食品

陳立忠：未受取消供肉配額衝擊

【本報訊】(記者 陸秀霞)廣南集團(1203)重申，現時所經營供港活雞、活豬和活牛仍有出口配額限制，集團目前難以估計日後冷凍肉類入口對鮮活商品的影響，惟會視市場變化準備開拓冰鮮和冷凍食品業務。

活豬牛雞仍有配額

廣南董事總經理陳立忠昨在記者會上指出，外經貿部文件只取消供港雞肉、豬肉和牛肉的配額，但對活豬、活牛和活雞仍實行配額管理。廣南的主營業務是鮮活商品，並非冷凍和冰鮮肉類，自通知實行至今逾二周時間看來，對集團業務並無正面衝擊。廣南昨收0.22元，升2.78%。

至於開放肉類供應後，大量肉類入口對活禽活畜所帶來的影響，陳立忠和廣南常務副主席李力都不願作出評估。去年本港禽流感發生期間，有意見認為要以冰鮮雞取代活雞，陳立忠認為此問題非一朝一夕可解決，還要考慮到消費習慣問題。

入口冰鮮終會獲准

雖然政府表示由於檢疫問題未解決，暫不由內地入口冰鮮肉類，對此李力則表示，相信檢疫制度會越來越嚴，隨着市場的開放，內地入口冰鮮肉將會獲准，廣南會在繼續做好活禽活畜代理的同時，視市場變化情況拓展冰鮮和冷凍肉類業務。但對於具體計劃和投資額，則以話題敏感為由拒透露。

現時，廣南行是最大的活雞代理商，代理活雞佔全港總數的85%，代理的活豬、活牛佔全港供應量約16%至18%，廣南行每年供港豬隻約28萬頭，其中8萬頭來自集團自營的豬場。

除豬牛雞肉外，外經貿部還取消供港凍活魚配額，廣南還是本港最大的塘魚代理商，供應全港100%塘魚。李力回應，現時供港塘魚仍由廣南進口，所有供貨合同沒有變化，他表示本身有優勢，不擔心開放後的競爭。

五豐行：無嚴重影響

另一活豬活牛供應商是華創(0291)旗下五豐行，約佔全港生豬市場的80%，五豐行前日就有關事件，只發出簡單的新聞稿，內容大意是對新辦法可能造成的影響正在評估，並指出公司業務多元化，單一商品的政策變化不會對經營造成嚴重影響。對於肉類市場開放，證券界有不同意見，有分析認為會另生豬價格受壓，對上述兩間公司有負面影響，凱基證券分析員蔡鐵康認為，活畜供應佔華創分銷業務的比例不會太多，即使有影響也會在半年至一年後才會顯現。

葉旭全調粵啤董事長 梁江接任廣南董事長

【本報訊】廣南原董事長葉旭全離開，調任粵海系另一上市公司粵海啤(0124)董事長，廣南董事總經理李力認為是正常人事調整，他稱葉旭全仍為廣南大股東廣東控股的董事副總經理，仍會在管理層面關注集團業務，新任的梁江接任為廣南董事長後，將有更多時間投入廣南業務。

S. C. M. P.

Checks on mainland farms

Cheung Chi-fai

Hong Kong food hygiene officers will inspect mainland farms to see if they meet hygiene standards before embracing the mainland's abolition of export controls on chilled pork and chicken.

The abolition, in line with China's entry to the World Trade Organisation and effective from January 1, will open the door to the importation of chilled meat, live fish and eventually live poultry from across the mainland.

No chilled meat from the mainland is currently imported. The supply of most meat products and livestock from China is monopolised by the Guangdong and Shenzhen authorities.

Following the change, local farmers fear they will be forced out of business once large quantities of chilled meat enter the local market. They are also concerned about the hygiene standards of the meat.

Lily Yam Kwan Pui-ying, Secretary for Environment and Food, said yesterday the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department was negotiating with the State General Administration for Quality Supervision and Inspection and Quarantine to discuss implementing the abolition.

She said the SAR had been assured that no chilled meat from the mainland would be allowed in until stringent controls on food safety agreed by both sides were in place. It was not known how many mainland farms intended to enter the Hong Kong market.

Local farmers have been facing competition with chilled pork exports from Thailand.