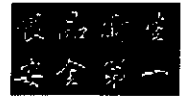




香港食品委員會

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## THE HONG KONG FOOD COUNCIL LTD.



委員會成員  
Governing Board  
Members:

港九菜業行工商總會  
HK & Kln Fruit & Vegetable  
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Merchants Assn

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香港麵粉商會  
HK Flour Merchants' Assn

香港食用油進出口商總會  
HK General Assn of Edible  
Oil Importers & Exporters

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HK Oil Merchants Assn

香港包裝專業協會  
HK Packaging Institute Ltd

香港進出口米商聯合會  
HK Rice Importers &  
Exporters Assn

香港南北行公所  
Nam Pak Hong Assn

香港中華總商會  
The Chinese General  
Chamber of Commerce,  
HK

香港中華廠商聯合會  
The Chinese Mfrs' Assn of  
HK

港九糖果餅乾及糕點製餅商會  
The Confectioners & Bakers  
Assn of HK & Kln

港九五行聯合會  
The HK & Kln Five Guilds  
Union

港九凍肉行商會  
The HK & Kln Frozen Meat  
Dealers Assn

港九煙酒洋酒飲食行商會  
The HK & Kln Provisions,  
Wine & Spirit Dealers' Assn

香港日本工商會議所  
The HK Japanese  
Chamber of Commerce &  
Industry

香港米行商會  
The Rice Merchants' Assn  
of HK

31<sup>st</sup> May, 2004

The Hon Fred Li, JP  
Chairman  
Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road  
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Li,

### Consultation on Prevention of Avian Influenza: Long Term Direction to Minimize the Risk of Human Infection

Whilst the Council are as concerned as anyone else on the dangers of Avian Influenza, we are concerned that without clear assessment of "alternatives", we might end up with a "cure" that is worst than the disease. For example:

#### (1) Economic Impact

- Central processing and cold chain in HK is not feasible for pure economic considerations and will result in the total destruction of the local poultry trade as we know it to-day.
- A central processing center in Hong Kong will be a white elephant. It is not cost effective and no matter how we do it, the processing center will ultimately be located across the border in China for cost reasons.
- Forget then about our chicken farms, and all those people involved in the live bird trading, transporting and wet market fresh retailing. Whilst achieving separation, the cost of tens of thousands of jobs, the cost of a way of our life, and the cost of pricing power being concentrated into just a few hands must be carefully considered.

#### Recommendations

- For the choice of less evils, if we must accept separation, having multi location local processing centers is a more desirable compromise.



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### (2) Public health consideration

- We know the dangers of avian flu, but do not know the downside and the risks involved in central processing. Concentrated processing into a huge center have been responsible for several incidence of major outbreaks of food poisoning of national proportions elsewhere.
- Chicken is such an important part of our diet and because it is usually consumed fresh, if there is a bug, through central processing, this will spread in our community and affect a huge proportion of our population before it is caught.
- Central processing and cold chain will also mean the consumption of less fresh meat and could open the door to a number of other diseases.


### Recommendations

- Before we embark on central processing, we need to be assured that central processing and cold chain is indeed better and does not pose new health risks. The government should examine experience in other jurisdictions with central processing and cold chain to ensure that any possible health risks is thoroughly researched and that the cure is not worse than the disease.

The Council will only support cold chain and central processing after thorough research as recommended above.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

  
Lee Fuen  
Chairman