

Press Release

HWFB response on Mainland freshwater fish supply

In response to media enquiries, a spokesman for the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau said that according to the agreement reached with the Mainland, only registered fish farms approved by the relevant Mainland Authorities were allowed to export freshwater fish to Hong Kong.

The spokesman said each consignment was required to be accompanied by health certificate issued by the relevant Authorities to testify that the fish were free of malachite green and other harmful substances.

To ensure all registered fish farms met with Hong Kong's health requirements, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has since September 2005 conducted inspection to these farms.

"All importers of freshwater fish from the Mainland are therefore required to provide documentary proof that their fish are originated from registered fish farms and with valid health certificate issued by the Mainland Authorities when these fish are imported to Hong Kong," he said.

"If the importers of freshwater fish are unable to produce the relevant documentary proof and health certificate when landing the fish at wholesale markets, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will refer the case to the FEHD.

"The FEHD will then hold the consignment for testing to ensure compliance with our public health requirements. If these products are found to contain malachite green, the consignment will be destroyed and the importers will be prosecuted. The details of the importers, including the vessels and farms exporting freshwater fish, will also be passed on to the Mainland Authorities for follow up actions," the spokesman added.

Meanwhile, the Customs and Excise Department will continue to stay vigilant in deterring unmanifested fish from entering Hong Kong. If the officers find any fish consignment covered by manifest suspicious, they will refer the case to the FEHD for follow up action.

The Administration is now working out detailed legislative proposals to regulate the safety of seafood in Hong Kong.

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