

**Replies to initial written questions
raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10**

**Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health
Session No.: 10**

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)001

Question Serial No.

0026

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: 3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In respect of the Administration's continued effort to develop a Poultry Slaughtering Centre in 2009-10, please advise this Committee on the following:

1. The Administration has indicated that the planned Poultry Slaughtering Centre will be scaled down as a result of a significant reduction in the number of existing live poultry stalls. Is there any provision earmarked for accessing the competition between the scaled-down Poultry Slaughtering Centre in Hong Kong and similar central slaughtering houses in Shenzhen nearby?
2. Will the Centre provide any value-added services such as direct sale or retail service other than slaughtering?
3. What is the detailed schedule for the tender, construction, commissioning and operation of the Centre?
4. What are the types and number of jobs to be created by the Centre?

Asked by: Hon. Cheung Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

To minimize the risk of avian influenza outbreak, implementation of central slaughtering is an important initiative in Government's policy of segregating live poultry from humans. A substantial number of live poultry traders have ceased business under the Buyout Scheme launched for the live poultry trade in 2008. Following the conclusion of the Scheme, the exact number of traders remaining is now available for finalising the key parameters of the Poultry Slaughtering Centre (PSC), including the scale of the facility.

The Administration is proceeding with the preparatory work on the development of the PSC, including the environmental impact assessment and land-use rezoning where the two statutory approval processes would be conducted in parallel. We would also conduct a study to assess the best mode of operation and ascertain market interests in operating the PSC. We expect that the PSC would come into operation in 2011/12.

The types and number of jobs to be created could not be estimated at this stage.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Mrs Stella HUNG</u>
Post Title	<u>Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)</u>
Date	<u>16.3.2009</u>

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)002

Question Serial No.

0028

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under this programme, why is there a significant drop of 41.8% in the revised estimate against the original estimate for 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The decrease of \$14.1 million (41.8%) in 2008-09 revised estimate for Programme (2) : Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 original estimate is mainly due to savings in the funds earmarked for controlling zoonotic diseases.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)003

Question Serial No.

0029

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under this programme, the estimated provision for 2009-10 is increased significantly to \$47.1 million, which is almost double the revised estimate for last year. The additional provisions are mainly for strengthening food safety protection and preventing zoonotic diseases. How much does each of these two items account for the provision? What are the specific projects involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The increase of \$47.1 million (240.3%) in 2009-10 estimate for Programme (2): Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 revised estimate is mainly attributable to the following-

	<u>\$ million</u>
(a) Reserve for conducting various surveys and studies on nutrition labeling and enhancing publicity on food safety matters	8.0
(b) Provision for promoting the accreditation of private laboratories for developing Hong Kong into a food testing hub and outsourcing of food tests	15.0
(c) Provision for meeting unexpected expenditure like controlling zoonotic diseases and coping with food incidents	19.0
(d) Provisions for the net increase of two posts and increases in other operating expenses	5.1
Total:	47.1

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)004

Question Serial No.

0027

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The recurrent expenditure per tonne of refuse collected increased by \$24 from \$162 in 2007 to \$186 in 2008, representing an actual increase of nearly 15%. The estimated expenditure for 2009 will further increase by \$6 per tonne. What are the reasons for the increase? Are there any studies on measures to control costs in the long term?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Waste collection service is provided by both in-house staff and contractors. The increase in recurrent expenditure is mainly attributable to civil service pay adjustments in the last two years, rising service contract prices and decrease in tonnage of refuse collected.

For service delivered by in-house staff, the department monitors changes in the refuse yield, reviews service demand and adjusts resource requirements to ensure cost-effectiveness.

Service delivered by contractors are procured by contract through open competitive bidding. Since there are sufficient service providers in the market, and the service requirements including the amount of refuse to be collected are

information available to all tenderers, the contract price should fairly reflect the market price for the service.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

12.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)005

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Question Serial No.

0030

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under this programme, Government Laboratory started to outsource some of the routine food testing work to commercial testing laboratories in 2008. The resources released from this outsourcing exercise were deployed to take up test method development and new testing work arising from amendments of food legislation. In this regard,

1. what were the scope of food testing and the number of samples outsourced respectively in 2008?
2. what is the reduction in the cost of testing after outsourcing?
3. what are the scope of food testing and the number of samples expected to be outsourced respectively in 2009?
4. what is the estimated amount of resources to be released?
5. is there any plan for extending the outsourcing exercise in the long run? If yes, please provide the timetable and areas to be further outsourced.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

1. In 2008-09, 22 000 tests (2 900 food samples) of sulphur dioxide, preservatives and organochlorine pesticide residues in food have been outsourced to the private laboratories.
2. The cost of testing of the outsourced items varies with the test parameters. For the tests outsourced by Government Laboratory to the private sector in 2008-09, the cost of testing by Government Laboratory was found comparable to the price offered by the private laboratories, about \$600 per sample on the average.
3. In 2009-10, about 77 000 tests (7 050 food samples) of sulphur dioxide, preservatives, heavy metals and various types of pesticide residues in food will be outsourced to the private laboratories.
4. The Government Laboratory plans to outsource some 77 000 food tests to the private sector during 2009-10, equivalent to about 50% of the routine food tests in the fiscal year. The resources so released, including six professional staff and ten technical staff will be re-deployed for the development of new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conducting testing work involving litigation, and assisting in contract management.

5. The Government Laboratory will closely monitor the situation and revise the outsourcing plan and schedule as appropriate and will promote the upgrading of private laboratories by sharing testing methods with them as well as conducting technical seminars, proficiency tests and inter-laboratory comparison studies on a more regular basis.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)006

Question Serial No.

0031

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, reference has been made to the outsourcing of food testing work. It is stated in the Budget Speech that the Administration is taking measures to support the development of food testing services, such as the provision of reputable accreditation services for private laboratories, so as to help Hong Kong to develop into a food testing hub in the region. What will be the estimated expenditure and manpower so required? Have any assessments been made on the number of food tests that can be undertaken by local private laboratories each year? Is there a shortfall of service? Also, are there any plans to estimate the additional number of food samples to be tested by local private laboratories in future? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The Hong Kong Accreditation Service under the Innovation and Technology Commission is responsible for providing accreditation service to private laboratories. The Innovation and Technology Commission strongly encourages private laboratories to obtain accreditation as laboratory accreditation gives assurance on the correctness and reliability of results to specific tests and calibration performed by a laboratory. The Hong Kong Accreditation Service will continue to provide assistance and support to private laboratories which are interested in obtaining accreditation. In this regard, an additional amount of \$1.6M per year will be provided to the Innovation and Technology Commission to strengthen its staffing support in the Hong Kong Accreditation Service and for promoting and enhancing its accreditation service.

In addition to supporting the laboratories through providing better and more efficient accreditation service through the Innovation and Technology Commission, the Government Laboratory will also assist by promoting the upgrading of private laboratories by sharing testing methods with them as well as conducting technical seminars, proficiency tests and inter-laboratory comparison studies on a more regular basis. Furthermore, the Government Laboratory plans to outsource some 77 000 food tests to the private sector during 2009-10 so as to release resources for the development of new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conducting testing work involving litigation, and assisting in contract management. The outsourcing of testing work to the private sector will also provide more business opportunities for the private laboratories.

Currently, the local private laboratories have the capacity of providing about one million food tests per year. The laboratories would further invest in additional manpower and equipment to cater for any market growth.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)007

Question Serial No.

0096

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Secretary for the Environment

Question:

There will be a net increase of 53 permanent posts for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department in 2009-10. Please provide the details and the total expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon. LAU Wong-fat

Reply:

Please see attached sheet.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MISS CHEUNG SIU HING** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation** _____

Date _____ **12 March 2009** _____

New posts for 2009-10: 53 posts

Rank of Post	No. of Post	Main Duties/Justifications/Work Arrangements
I. Wholesale Markets Management		
Agricultural Officer	1 [Personal Emoluments expenditure: \$0.5 M]	◆ To enhance support for management of law and order and hygiene in the four Government wholesale food markets.
II. Nature Conservation		
Forestry Officer	4	◆ To set up a permanent team to provide essential professional, executive and technical support for the management of the Hong Kong Wetland Park.
Senior Field Officer	1	
Field Officer I	5	
Field Officer II	10	
Field Assistant	14	
Executive Officer II	1	
Clerical Officer	1	
Assistant Clerical Officer	2 [Personal Emoluments expenditure: \$10.0M]	
III. Management of Marine Parks		
Fisheries Supervisor II	2	◆ To carry out enforcement and management work in marine parks.
Field Assistant	8	
Artisan	4 [Personal Emoluments expenditure: \$2.4M]	
Total	53 [Personal Emoluments expenditure: \$12.9M]	

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)008

Question Serial No.

0098

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

During 2009-10, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will give emphasis to assisting farmers to capture high-value-market niches by providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production. Please provide the details on the manpower involved. What is the increase in manpower and expenditure in comparison with that of 2008-09?

Asked by: Hon. LAU Wong-fat

Reply:

In 2009-10, about 16 staff and \$5.7 million are allocated to promote organic farming, and another 10 staff and \$4.0 million are allocated to promote intensive greenhouse production. The same provision has been earmarked for 2008-09.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 13 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)009

Question Serial No.

0213

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

How many Mainland processing plants supply chilled pork to Hong Kong at present ? What was the number of inspections conducted to the above plants in 2008 and how much manpower and expenditure were required for this purpose ?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

At present, there are four processing plants in the Mainland approved for supplying chilled pork to Hong Kong. Of these, three processing plants are active exporters whereas the remaining one has not supplied chilled pork to Hong Kong since mid 2007.

In 2008-09, officers of the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) conducted three inspections on the three active chilled pork processing plants, one on each plant.

The estimated expenditure for the work on import control in 2008-09 is \$84.3 million. Separate breakdown on the resources and manpower provided specifically for inspecting processing plants of chilled pork is not readily available.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)010

Question Serial No.

0245

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The number of applications for import of frozen confections processed in 2008 was 84, representing a decrease of 32.8 % over 2007. What are the reasons for the decrease ?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department does not put a limit on the number of applications for frozen confection import. The volume of import is determined by the market and we are not placed to explain the drop in applications.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)011

Question Serial No.

0246

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, there will be a net increase of 12 posts in 2009-10. Please set out in tabular form the title, rank and duties of these posts as well as the annual salary expenses involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows –

<u>Grade/Post title</u>	<u>Duties</u>	<u>Annual salary</u>
Health Inspector Scientific Officer (Medical) Field Assistant Laboratory Attendant	To perform food safety regulatory duties	The estimated annual salary is \$10.4 million.
Pest Control Officer Pest Control Assistant	To provide pest control services	
Administration support staff	To provide administration support	

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)012

Question Serial No.

0252

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What are the actual number of samples tested in 2008 and the estimated number of samples to be tested in 2009 under the Administration's routine Food Surveillance Programme? Please state briefly the scope of sampling. What are the manpower and expenditure required?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The Government Laboratory provides testing service in supporting the food surveillance programme of the Centre for Food Safety and completed a total of 127 006 tests (29 321 samples) in 2008. As the Government Laboratory plans to outsource part of its routine testing work to the private sector, the estimated output for 2009 is increased to 163 000 tests (30 000 samples). The scope of testing includes additives, contaminants, and pesticide and veterinary drug residues in food as well as food composition. 73 professional and technical staff are engaged in routine food testing work with an estimated expenditure of \$80,079,000 for 2008-09 and \$61,183,000 for 2009-10. The estimated expenditure for 2008-09 is higher than 2009-10 as more capital equipment is procured in 2008-09 for testing development work.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 19.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)013

Question Serial No.

0253

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What are the numbers of tests performed on food samples for regulatory compliance purposes in the three years from 2006 to 2008? What is the comparable figure estimated for 2009?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The number of food tests (with the corresponding number of food samples in bracket) for regulatory compliance purposes completed for the years 2006, 2007 and 2008 and the estimated output for 2009 is as follows:

2006 (actual)	2007 (actual)	2008 (actual)	2009 (estimated)
112 421 tests (24 269 samples)	158 735 tests (30 609 samples)	127 006 tests (29 321 samples)	163 000 tests (30 000 samples)

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)014

Question Serial No.

0254

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In respect of the Food Safety Laboratory, please provide details of the expenditure in 2008-09, the existing staffing establishment and the estimated expenditure and manpower for 2009-10 respectively.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

Expenditure for the Food Safety Laboratory, as part of food testing services provided by the Government Laboratory, is 30 professional and technical staff with projected expenditure \$36 million for 2008-09 and estimated expenditure \$23 million for 2009-10. Expenditure for the Food Safety Laboratory is higher in 2008-09 as more capital expenditure was incurred for procurement of equipment when the Laboratory was opened in 2008.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)015

Question Serial No.

0255

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The testing/report of a food complaint case has to be completed within 25 working days. As it takes almost a month to complete the work, it may not be fair to the individuals or trades involved in the complaint case. With further outsourcing of services, are there any plans to enhance the relevant services so as to shorten the time for testing?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

Testing for food complaint cases is investigatory in nature. Detailed step-wise investigation for each case is needed. The sample turn around time for testing varies according to the nature of the complaint cases that governs the types of tests required for the investigation. For example, for cases involving deteriorated food samples, which amount to about 40% of the total number of cases, the turn around time may be as short as four to six working days and for cases involving melamine in food, the turn around time takes only 24 hours. On the other hand, for cases requiring detailed step-wise investigation using a variety of techniques such as those involving suspected foreign substances, the sample turn around time may take longer. Government Laboratory always strives at providing a timely testing service by streamlining work processes and adopting new technology whenever applicable. It should be noted that although the target has been set at 25 working days, in 2008 a shorter average sample turn around time of 19 working days was achieved.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)016

Question Serial No.

0266

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

A number of feral buffaloes abandoned by farmers are seen in country parks and their number is on the rise due to reproduction. Has the Administration taken any measures to address the problem? If yes, please explain the measures in detail. In this connection, will there be an increase in provision in 2009-10? Please provide the breakdowns.

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply:

It is estimated that there are currently about one hundred feral buffaloes in Hong Kong. They are mainly found in southern Lantau Island and north-western part of the New Territories.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) follows up on reports or complaints of stray buffaloes or buffaloes causing damage, and removes the animals involved as appropriate. AFCD also works closely with relevant animal welfare organizations and village representatives to manage the population and distribution of buffaloes. A trial programme aiming at controlling the population of feral buffaloes on Lantau Island through sterilising male feral buffaloes has been put in place since 2007.

In 2009-10, AFCD will continue to spend approximately \$40,000 on managing feral buffaloes. The provision mainly relates to salary of the staff involved in buffalo capture operations.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MISS CHEUNG SIU HING** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation** _____

Date _____ **11 March 2009** _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)017

Question Serial No.

0459

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

One of the matters requiring special attention in 2009-10 is strengthening the facilities and ability to provide diagnostic tests for animal diseases including avian influenza and screening tests for chemical residues in food animals. Please provide the relevant details, including improvement items, targets to be achieved, and the expenditure and manpower required.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

We have validated and adopted a range of laboratory tests for the diagnosis of animal diseases including avian influenza and screening for chemical residues in food animals. These tests include chemical analysis, necropsy, histopathology examination, virus isolation and serological and molecular techniques.

To strengthen the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department's testing capacity and capability, we are building a new annex of about 450 square meters to the Tai Lung Veterinary Laboratory. The new annex is now at its final stage of construction and is expected to be fully operational within 2009. Furthermore, we are planning to set up a biosafety level 3 modular laboratory of about 73 square meters next to the new annex to enhance the ability and safety standards in handling pathogens with high zoonotic potential (such as the avian influenza virus). The project is expected to be completed in 2010.

In 2009-10, we aim to introduce a new subtyping test and rapid test kits for avian influenza, as well as a new screening test for chemical residue in food animals.

The estimated number of diagnostic tests for animal diseases (including avian influenza) and screening tests for chemical residues in food animals in 2009-10 are 370,000 and 100,000 respectively. A total provision of \$37.3 million has been earmarked in 2009-10 for these activities with the involvement of 57 staff.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MISS CHEUNG SIU HING _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)018

Question Serial No.

0460

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Government fresh food wholesale markets have handled a total of 19 600 requests for assistance in 2008, representing an increase of over 30% in comparison to 2007. Please give the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP

Reply:

In July 2008, the Government announced that the rent of the Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market, the Western Wholesale Food Market and the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market would be waived for the months of October 2008 and October 2009. During the year, tenants at the three markets also needed to renew their tenancy agreements. We therefore received a larger number of enquiries from market tenants on rental related matters when compared to 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 12 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)019

Question Serial No.

0351

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, the Department will enhance the facilities and management of public markets, inter alia, by continuing improvement works and market promotion. Please provide details, including planned improvement works and promotional activities, as well as the respective expenditure, manpower and timetable involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2009-10, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will carry out general improvement works in 13 markets at an estimated total cost of \$195 million. These market improvement works include mainly upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage and fire services provisions. The general improvement works of these markets are expected to be completed in one to two years.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to organise promotional activities in public markets, including roving exhibitions, thematic workshops and festive celebration activities. Quarterly newsletters will also be published to provide updated market information and publicize promotional activities. To further promote active use of public markets, we have since February 2009 lowered the upset price of market stalls which have been vacant for six months or more to attract more potential bidders. We will introduce service trades in selected public markets and expand the variety of permitted trades, for example traditional snack shops or bakeries, to enhance the attractiveness of markets. Planning and coordination of market promotion activities will be undertaken by existing staff of the Department. For 2009-10, the expenditure for market promotions is estimated at \$3 million. For markets where management services have been contracted out, festive promotional activities will be undertaken by contractors at their expense.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)020

Question Serial No.

0352

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

With regard to the stalls in public market (excluding cooked food markets) under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, please provide data on the following (as at 31 December 2008):

1. number of existing live poultry stalls;
2. number of stalls let out;
3. number of vacant stalls;
4. total number of stalls;
5. vacancy rate;
6. highest stall rental;
7. lowest stall rental;
8. average stall rental; and
9. median rent.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The data sought is provided as follows -

- | | | | |
|----|--|---|----------|
| 1. | number of existing live poultry stalls | : | 86 |
| 2. | number of stalls let out | : | 10 988 |
| 3. | number of vacant stalls | : | 3 344* |
| 4. | total number of stalls | : | 14 332 |
| 5. | vacancy rate | : | 23.33% |
| 6. | highest stall rental | : | \$62,286 |
| 7. | lowest stall rental | : | \$10.30 |
| 8. | average stall rental | : | \$2,805 |
| 9. | median rent | : | \$1,800 |

* including 1 004 stalls frozen due to impending market improvement works and re-development.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)021

Question Serial No.

0353

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, the Department will consider further extending the scheme on contracting out market management to other districts. Please provide details, including the time frame for extension of the scheme and the savings in manpower and expenditure.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows -

- (1) In 2009-10, we will contract out the management of eight markets in total in Tai Po District and Islands District in July and October respectively. After contracting out these eight markets, there will be a total of 65 public markets managed by contractors in the private sector.
- (2) We expect manpower savings of 17 staff from the above contracting out exercise for the eight markets. The staff concerned will be gainfully redeployed. Currently, we are not able to specify the savings in expenditure, as the tender exercise has yet to commence and the tender price is not known.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)022

Question Serial No.

0401

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please give a breakdown by farm types of the number of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong and the estimated number of inspections to be conducted in 2009. Please provide the number of inspections conducted for each type of farms in 2008. Please also advise on the expenditure and manpower required for 2008 (actual) and 2009 (estimated).

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The number of registered Mainland farms exporting live food animals to Hong Kong in 2008 is tabulated as follows -

Farm type	Poultry	Pig	Cattle	Goat	Aquatic Food Animal
Number of Registered Mainland Farms	91	293	75	5	52

In 2008, a total of 50 Mainland farms were inspected. A similar number of farm inspections are expected in 2009. The breakdown of farms inspected in 2008 by type and location is tabulated as follows -

No. of Farm Visit in Mainland	Type of Farm			
	Poultry	Water Fowl	Pig	Aquatic Food Animal
Guangdong	25	6	6	
Shenzhen	4		1	
Zhuhai	3			
Hainan	1			
Hubei				2
Liaoning				2

Farm inspections are carried out by inspection teams comprising veterinary officers, field officers and research officer. About \$6 million in 2008-09 and \$7.7 million in 2009-10 is estimated to be spent on farm inspection.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)023

Question Serial No.

0402

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under the registration system for Mainland fresh water fish farms for supply to Hong Kong, how many fish farms were inspected and how many inspection visits were made in 2008? Please advise on the estimated number of fish farms to be inspected and inspection visits to be made in 2009, as well as the expenditure and manpower required.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2008, the Centre for Food Safety inspected a total of 22 Mainland fish farms. In 2009, we plan to sustain the same level of visits. The visits will be undertaken by existing inspection teams comprising veterinary officers, field officers and research officer.

About \$6 million in 2008-09 and \$7.7 million in 2009-10 is estimated to be spent for the work on farm inspection. Separate breakdown on the resources and manpower provided specifically for fish farm inspection is not readily available.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

Reply Serial No.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

FHB(FE)024

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO

Question Serial No.

INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

0403

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In 2008, a total of 236 food business licences were suspended/cancelled, representing a substantial increase of more than 40% over 2007. What are the reasons for the increase? What is the respective number of food business licences suspended and cancelled?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The increase in licence suspensions and cancellations in 2008 was due to a larger number of convictions in that year for breaching the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) and its subsidiary legislation, relating to improper storage of open food; use of open space for preparation of food/storage or washing of utensils; and unauthorized extension of food business beyond the licensed area. Such convictions will lead to the registration of demerit points against the licences. Accumulation of sufficient demerit points will in turn lead to licence suspensions or even cancellations. Among the 236 cases in 2008, 219 were related to licence suspension and the remaining 17 were related to licence cancellation.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)025

Question Serial No.

0404

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

What is the number of appeal cases against the suspension of food business licences in 2008, and how many cases were allowed? Of the appeal cases against licence suspension, what is the average period of suspension? What is the longest and shortest period of licence suspension?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2008, there were 23 appeal cases against food business licence suspension; 15 cases were heard and eight are pending hearing. Of the cases heard, the Licensing Appeals Board (LIAB) shortened the suspension period in one, upheld the suspension decision in nine and has yet to rule on the remaining five. For the 10 cases already ruled by LIAB, the average suspension period after appeal was 7.4 days. Taking into account the appeal outcome as known to date, the longest licence suspension in that year was 14 days and the shortest was four.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

12.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)026

Question Serial No.

0466

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, it is stated that the Department will improve the on-line Application Tracking Facility and enhance publicity of the Facility. Please advise on the expenditure and manpower involved. Have any statistics been compiled on the percentage of licence applicants using the Facility? Will additional resources be provided in the future to extend the Facility to other licence or endorsement applications?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Application Tracking Facility System (ATF) was developed at a cost of about \$1.2 million to enable applicants for food business-related licences to monitor on-line the progress of their applications. Since the opening of the ATF in February 2008, there has been a total of 2 530 applications for food business-related licences covered by the ATF. The applicants or their authorised persons for 1 230 of these applications have made use of the ATF, representing nearly half of all applications.

We will continue to promote the awareness and usage of the ATF among existing and prospective food business operators at regular seminars on Restaurant Licensing organized by the Department using existing resources. We will also conduct customer satisfaction surveys to collect views from business operators on the ATF and assess whether the system should be extended to other licence applications.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)027

Question Serial No.

0467

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, there will be a net decrease of 11 posts in 2009-10. Please set out in tabular form the title, rank and duties of these posts as well as the annual savings in salary expenses.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows –

<u>Grade/Post title</u>	<u>Duties</u>	Annual savings in <u>salary expenses</u>
Ganger Workman I Workman II	To provide environmental hygiene services	As all are vacant posts, the deletion will not result in reduction in salary expenditure

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)028

Question Serial No.

0349

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

One of the items mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10 is to review the liquor licensing policy. Please provide details of the measure, including the timetable for consultation and legislative amendments. What are the number of applications for liquor licences in the past two years, the success rate and the average time for processing these applications?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

In June 2008, we consulted the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene of the Legislative Council (LegCo) on preliminary proposals to address the fire safety, overcrowding and other environmental nuisance problems that may arise from the proliferation of upstairs bars and to further enhance the liquor licensing regime for trade facilitation (such as relaxing the requirement that a liquor licence must be held by an individual and extending the validity period of a licence). We are now refining the proposals taking into account the comments from Members. We will consult the LegCo Panel, the trade, District Councils and other stakeholders extensively once we have refined the proposals.

In 2007 and 2008, the Liquor Licensing Board received 854 and 856 applications for liquor licences (including club liquor licences) and the average time for processing these applications was 43 and 41 days in 2007 and 2008 respectively. Seven applications were refused each year; and the success rate in the past two years was both 99.18%.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 13.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)029

Question Serial No.

0350

Head: 139 Food and Health
Bureau (Food Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

One of the items mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10 is to continue to collaborate with the Mainland Authorities to explore the feasibility of applying information technology to enhance the traceability of food. Please provide details of the measure, including the progress of various studies, scope of application, and the funding and manpower required.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

FHB and FEHD are working in collaboration with the Mainland authorities on a pilot programme to apply Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology on a traceability scheme on live pigs imported from Guangdong Province. In 2008, the programme primarily focused on the testing of the reliability of hand-held detectors and the computer software. In 2009, the test will focus on the reliability of the passageway reader device. This will be followed by the testing of the entire system. The feasibility of applying RFID technology to live pigs imported from other provinces and other foods will be explored in collaboration with the Mainland authorities.

FEHD has, so far, spent about \$0.2 million for purchasing equipment such as the hand-held detectors and computer software, and about \$0.8 million on additional manpower for operating the equipment and testing exercises. It has also committed about \$3 million for further development of the pilot project in 2009-10.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Mrs. Stella HUNG

Post Title _____

Permanent Secretary for Food and
Health (Food)

Date _____

16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)030

Question Serial No.

0465

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In 2009-10, there will be a net increase of two posts including one supernumerary post for strengthening support in taking forward the Food Safety Bill and upgrading food safety standards under this programme. Please provide details about the post title, rank, duties and annual payroll cost of these posts.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

Two four-year time-limited posts including one Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) post and one Personal Secretary I (PSI) post are proposed to be created under Programme (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety in 2009-10. The AOSGB will strengthen directorate support in taking forward various legislation relating to food safety and food standards, including the Food Safety Bill, whereas the PSI will provide secretarial support to the AOSGB post. The financial provision for the AOSGB and PSI post is \$1.76 million and \$0.3 million per annum respectively.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)031

Question Serial No.

0535

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

With regard to the target of dealing with complaints on wasps/bees infestation within 6 working days, please advise on:

- (a) the total number of complaints received in 2008;
- (b) whether the response time of 6 working days will be shortened;
- (c) the way in which the complaints are handled; and
- (d) the number of days taken to eliminate these infestations in general.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) A total of 4 418 wasp/bee infestation-related complaints were received in 2008.
- (b) Cases of wasp/bee infestation-related complaints will be dealt with as soon as manpower permits. During peak seasons, the number of cases pending action may exceed the maximum caseload that a pest control team could handle in a day. As such, some cases might have to be handled later. In the light of our current level of manpower and the caseload in previous years (especially during peak seasons), we consider the current target response time of six working days reasonable and have no plans to revise the target.

- (c) During an infestation control operation, insecticide will be applied to the wasp/bee nests before the nests are removed.

- (d) In general, infestation control operations will be conducted within one to six days of receiving a wasp/bee infestation-related complaint.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)032

Question Serial No.

0536

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Regarding the vehicles carrying poultry inspected at Man Kam To, please advise on why the number for each recent year represents a significant decrease over the preceding year.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The number of vehicles carrying live poultry inspected at Man Kam To is dependent on the number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland. The usual daily import limit on live chickens came down from 20 000 in January 2007 to the current 7 000 chickens. In addition, there were two suspensions on importation of Mainland poultry in 2008 due to two separate outbreaks of avian influenza in Hong Kong. These factors reduced the number of vehicles needed to carry live poultry into Hong Kong and hence the number of inspections on them.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)033

Question Serial No.

0537

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Regarding the number of rodent trappings, the actual number for 2008 and the estimated number for 2009 are both substantially higher than the actual number for 2007. What are the reasons for the increase?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

To further improve the effectiveness of our rodent control efforts, we have since 2008 been placing more rodent trappings to supplement poison baits. There was hence an increase in the number of rodent trappings placed in 2008, and that to be placed in 2009.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)034

Question Serial No.

0564

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Regarding application for licences issued by the Department, please advise on the types of licence whose applications cannot be submitted by electronic means as at present? Will the Department consider extending the electronic submission scheme to these licence applications? If yes, please advise on the time frame of implementation for each type of licence and the expenditure required.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

At present, no food business-related licence (including liquor licence) applications and trade licence (such as swimming pool licence and commercial bathhouse licence) applications can be submitted by electronic means. The Department and the Efficiency Unit are working on the development of a platform for on-line submission and processing of liquor licence applications. It is expected that the system will be launched in the second half of 2009, at an estimated expenditure of \$7.7 million. Depending on the outcome of its implementation, the feasibility of extending the new system to other types of food business and trade licences will be considered.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)035

Question Serial No.

0565

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

With regard to the elimination of environmental hygiene blackspots, please advise on the total number of blackspots in the territory at present and their specific locations, as well as the number of blackspots to be cleared in the current year.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

Environmental hygiene blackspots refer to those locations under repeated complaints for environmental hygiene problems. As at end-February 2009, there were 106 environmental hygiene blackspots in the territory (including 31 in the Hong Kong and Islands region, 44 in the Kowloon region and 31 in the New Territories region). A list of these blackspots is at Annex. The complaints mainly relate to unauthorised extension of food businesses, hawking activities, dripping air-conditioners and public cleanliness in general. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to provide environmental hygiene services and address problems identified at these blackspots.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

List of environmental hygiene blackspots as at end-February 2009

Hong Kong and Islands	
1	Chun Yeung Street, Java Road and Tong Shui Road, including the rear lanes
2	Hoi Chak Street, Finnie Street, Hoi Hong Street, Hoi Kwong Street, Hoi Tai Street and Hoi Wan Street
3	Shing On Street, Shau Kei Wan Road between Tai On Street and Tai Cheong Street, including the rear lanes
4	Kam Wa Street, Tai Tak Street, Mong Lung Street, and Aldrich Street, including the rear lanes
5	Sections of Bowrington Road, Wan Chai Road, Canal Road West, and the vicinity of the Bowrington Road Market
6	Wan Chai Road, Tai Yuen Street, Cross Street, Triangle Street, Tai Wo Street, Stone Nullah Lane and the vicinity
7	Tang Lung Street
8	Sections of Hennessy Road and Johnston Road
9	Paterson Street and Yee Wo Street
10	Chan Tong Lane
11	Tai Wong Street West, and the rear lanes between Tai Wong Street East and Swatow Street
12	Percival Street, Lockhart Road and Jaffe Road
13	Oi Kwan Road and Tak Yan Street
14	Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road
15	Praya Kennedy Town
16	South Lane
17	Tung Loi Lane
18	Open space opposite to 1 High Street
19	Open space opposite to 88 Robinson Road
20	Lyttelton Road Refuse Collection Point
21	Junction of High Street and Centre Street
22	Upper Lascar Row
23	Aberdeen Street
24	Graham Street
25	Rear lane at No.17-19 Wellington Street
26	Vacant site at the end of Sam To Lane
27	Rear lanes at 134, 136 and 138 Jervois Street

28	Junction of Yat Tung Street and Chung Yan Road
29	Ping Chong Road
30	Section of Pak She Praya Road
31	Section of Tai Hing Tai Road
Kowloon	
32	53-57 Haiphong Road
33	Section of Haiphong Road underneath flyover of Kowloon Park Drive
34	Section of Man Cheong Street
35	Area underneath Ferry Street Flyover (section between Dundas Street and Public Square Street)
36	Yau Ma Tei Fruit Wholesale Market and its vicinity
37	36-44 Nathan Road
38	54 Nathan Road
39	83-97 Nathan Road
40	29-31 Chatham Road South
41	Food premises along Parkes Street
42	Food premises along Temple Street, Woosung Street and Canton Road
43	Area between Shung Ling Street and Foo Yuen Street
44	Wan Fung Street
45	Ngau Chi Wan Village
46	Rear-lanes bounded by Fat Tseung Street, Shun Ning Road, Wing Lung Street and Castle Peak Road
47	Rear-lanes bounded by Yen Chow Street, Ki Lung Street, Kweilin Street and Tai Nan Street
48	Rear-lane bounded by Kweilin Street, Tai Nam Street, Pei Ho Street and Lai Chi Kok Road
49	The vicinity of Pei Ho Street Market
50	Shun Ning Road, opposite to Po On Road Market
51	Berwick Street, opposite to Shek Kip Mei Market
52	The vicinity of Golden Building (area bounded by Yen Chow Street, Fuk Wa Street, Kweilin Street & Fuk Wing Street)
53	Passage outside Tung Chau Street Temporary Market
54	Sections of Yu Chau Street, Ki Lung Street and Tai Nan Street between Yen Chow Street and Kweilin Street
55	Junction of Yen Chow Street West and Tung Chau Street (in front of Tung Chau Street Temporary Market)
56	Junction of Tonkin Street and Cheung Sha Wan Road

57	Rear lanes at 324-362A Portland Street
58	Rear lanes at 165-203 Sai Yee Street
59	Section of Bute Street between Sai Yeung Choi Street South and Sai Yee Street
60	Section of Dundas Street between Sai Yeung Choi Street South and Sai Yee Street
61	Section of Nelson Street between Canton Road to Ferry Street
62	Section of Argyle Street between Shanghai Street and Ferry Street
63	Junction of Tak Man Street and Hung Hom Road
64	Yuk Yat Street opposite to Hoi Shum Park
65	Sung On Street
66	Wan On Street
67	Junction of Mei King Street and Mei Kwong Street
68	Peace Avenue, Liberty Avenue, Victory Avenue, Emma Avenue and Julia Avenue
69	Rear lane at 7-27 Mei King Street
70	Rear lane at 478 Chatham Road North
71	4-24 Bailey Street
72	Site 5, Whampoa Garden
73	Shui Wo Street
74	Lane adjacent to Yue Man Square Playground on Fu Yan Street
75	Hill slope opposite to Ping Tin Estate
New Territories	
76	Kwai Fong Circuit and Shun Fong Street
77	Rear lanes at Tai Wai Road, Chik Shun Street, Tsuen Nam Road and Chik Fai Street
78	The vicinity of Mei Lam Estate
79	Mei Tin Road
80	The vicinity of Fortune Plaza and Tai Po Plaza
81	The vicinity of Wan Tau Street
82	The vicinity of Greenery Plaza
83	The "Four Lanes": Tai Ming Lane, Tai Kwong Lane, Tai Wing Lane and Kwong Fuk Lane
84	55-71 Fu Shin Street
85	The vicinity of Jade Plaza
86	Chuen Lung Street, Ho Pui Street and San Tsuen Street
87	Rear lane on Ho Pui Street close to Hoover Plaza
88	Tai Ho Road, Tsuen Wan Market Street and Chung On Street
89	Lo Tak Wai

90	Sam Pei Square
91	Tsing Ho Square
92	Ho Pong Street
93	Wo Ping Path
94	Kai Man Path
95	Tsing Yin Street
96	Kei Lun Path and Yan Oi Tong Circuit
97	Kin Kwan Street
98	Public Car Park at Tsing Yeung Circuit
99	Yuen Long New Street
100	Hop Choi Street near Tung Yick Market
101	Chun Yin Square
102	Fook Tak Street around Tai Kiu Market
103	Yau San Street
104	The vicinity of Kin Yip Street Cooked Food Market
105	Kam Fai Path
106	Lane at 1-2 Sai Kung Hoi Pong Square

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)036

Question Serial No.

0508

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What is the provision earmarked for providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production to farmers in the estimate for 2009-10?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply:

In 2009-10, about 16 staff and \$5.7 million are allocated to promote organic farming, and another 10 staff and \$4.0 million are allocated to promote intensive greenhouse production.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 13 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)037

Question Serial No.

0345

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In this programme, the Administration has revised the target completion time in respect of testing, with testing of urgent samples relating to food incidents within 2 working days and testing of samples relating to food poisoning within 1 working day. What is the respective area covered by the two categories? Take 2008 as an example, what were the numbers of samples involved in these two categories?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

From 2009 onwards, the previous targets of "samples relating to food poisoning within one working day" and "food samples for regulatory compliance purposes within target reporting time averaging 19 working days" are regrouped into two new targets. The new targets are "urgent samples relating to food incidents within two working days" and "other food samples within reporting time averaging 19 working days". The number of tests under the new category of "urgent samples relating to food incidents within two working days" amounted to a total of 3 951 in 2008. The re-grouping of performance targets from 2009 onwards aims at providing a clearer and more precise description and indication of the reporting time for processing food samples involving different levels of urgency and complexity.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)038

Question Serial No.

0346

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

After outsourcing food testing to commercial laboratories, how does the Administration monitor the quality as well as technological level of the outsourced work, and ensure that the testing results are accurate? What are the resources, manpower and expenditures involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

Private laboratories undertaking outsourcing contracts from the Government Laboratory must have been accredited by the Hong Kong Accreditation Service under the Innovation and Technology Commission in the specific tests and must maintain the accreditation status throughout the contract period. During the contract period, Government Laboratory would implement a number of quality assurance measures including on-site audits and quality control means such as introduction of blind samples/split samples and control checks to monitor the performance of the contract laboratories including the quality of the test results. Estimated expenditure for the outsourcing contract is about \$9M.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)039

Question Serial No.

0347

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health/ Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

In response to the recent concern in the industry over the sale of counterfeit wine in Hong Kong, will the Administration allocate additional resources to enhance the testing service for wine and introduce relevant testing methods in order to facilitate the development of Hong Kong as a wine distribution hub of Asia? If yes, what are the additional resources to be allocated and the estimated number of samples to be tested? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

To prevent and combat illegal activities related to counterfeit wine, the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) has formed a dedicated investigation team to carry out targeted investigation and enforcement actions. C&ED also formed an alliance with the wine industry in October 2008 to foster direct communication and intelligence exchange. In addition, C&ED is strengthening its cooperation with customs authorities and the relevant regulatory and enforcement agencies in major wine producing regions through establishing channels of communication, and developing mechanisms for intelligence exchange and the sharing of information on individual cases. We will formulate relevant enforcement strategies and acquire knowledge about the trade marks of wine and their anti-forgery features, so as to enhance the effectiveness of our enforcement actions.

C&ED will mount enforcement operations to combat counterfeit wine activities based on intelligence. As for the work on differentiating genuine wine from counterfeit wine, the follow-up action would depend on the circumstances of the case. It may include authoritative verification of the trademark by the relevant trademark owner or his agent and investigation into the reliability of the source of supply.

The additional work relating to preventing and combating counterfeit wine (including professional training, intelligence collection, investigation and enforcement actions) will be absorbed by redeployment of C&ED's existing resources, without a request for additional provision or manpower.

Wine will also be tested under the food surveillance programme of the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, to ensure that wine complies with relevant food safety standards. No additional resources are required by CFS.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)040

Question Serial No.

0348

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Please give an account of the test method development and new testing work arising from amendments of food legislation, which the Administration is expected to take up in 2009. What are the expenditures and manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

In 2009-10, the Government Laboratory plans to outsource about 77 000 routine food tests to the private laboratories, which is equivalent to about 50% of the total routine food tests in the fiscal year. The resources thus released will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation and assist in contract management.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)041

Question Serial No.

0354

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In 2009-10, the Government Laboratory's total expenditure on plant, equipment and works is estimated to be \$41,027,000, more than 40% lower than the approved estimate for the previous year. What is the reason for that? Please account for the expenditure on testing equipment in connection with food safety.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

In 2009-10, the Government Laboratory's total expenditure on plant, equipment and works is estimated to be \$41,027,000, which is lower than the approved estimate for the previous year (\$69,956,000). This is mainly due to the reduced requirement for procurement of new capital equipment in 2009-10.

For food safety testing, the acquisition of capital equipment in 2008-09 is projected to be about \$28,700,000 that includes a range of advanced analytical instruments for testing related to food contaminants and nutrition labelling as well as development of testing methods in relation to the future legislative control on pesticide residues in food. In 2009-10, it is estimated that \$10,005,000 would be needed for replacement of some existing capital equipment for food safety testing work. Government Laboratory will continue to monitor the situation and take steps to procure new capital equipment when a need arises.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)042

Question Serial No.

0745

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

- (a) The financial provision for the Director of Bureau's Office has been increased from \$6.4 million in 2007-08 to \$9.3 million in 2008-09 (Revised) and \$11.6 million in 2009-10. What are the reasons? Please set out the amounts and details of the new expenditure items.
- (b) Please explain why the revised estimate for 2008-09 is 21.8% lower than the original estimate. Are there any planned expenditure items not proceeded with as scheduled?

Asked by: Hon. CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply:

- (a) The financial provision in the revised estimate for 2008-09 is \$2.9 million higher than the actual expenditure for 2007-08. The increase is mainly due to the creation of one position of Under Secretary and one position of Political Assistant under the Political Appointment System, and the related expenses on administrative and secretarial support. The 2009-10 estimate is \$2.3 million higher than the revised estimate for 2008-09. This is mainly due to the need for full-year provision in 2009-10 for the positions of Under Secretary and Political Assistant already filled in 2008-09.
- (b) The 2008-09 revised estimate is lower than the original estimate by \$2.6 million (21.8%). This is mainly due to the fact that the Under Secretary and the Political Assistant reported for duty only in September 2008 and July 2008 respectively. As such, the provision originally earmarked for the full-year expenditure for these two positions is under-spent.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)043

Question Serial No.

0635

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the number of samples taken for testing from various fresh food wholesale markets over the past 3 years, namely 2006, 2007 and 2008, please give a break down of the samples by food type and market. How many samples were found to be substandard in terms of food safety?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) conducts food surveillance by taking food samples for chemical and microbiological testing at import, wholesale and retail levels. The total number of samples taken in the past three years is tabulated below.

	2006	2007	2008
No. of food samples taken	64 915	65 206	66 726
No. of unsatisfactory samples	197	326	233

Breakdown by food type and sampling location is not readily available.

Separately, as part of its service to provide quality assurance to its customers, the Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) operates a laboratory at its Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Vegetable Market to screen incoming vegetables for pesticide residues. The total number of samples taken in the past three years in this market and the number of samples not meeting the above standards are tabulated below.

	2006	2007	2008
No. of vegetable samples taken	49 211	46 209	44 587
No. of unsatisfactory samples	0	1	0

VMO will alert FEHD to any unsatisfactory results so that follow-up action would be taken. VMO will also advise the relevant traders to destroy the vegetables.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 18 March 2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)044

Question Serial No.

0636

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What plans does the Government have to promote organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production in 2009-10? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will organize a training programme of seminars, workshops and on-farm demonstrations throughout the year to help farmers to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in organic farming and greenhouse production. The Department will also continue to conduct adaptive studies to improve growing methods; prevent diseases and pests; and to select suitable plant varieties to raise farmers' productivity and quality of production.

In 2009-10, the amounts of expenditure earmarked for promoting organic farming and intensive greenhouse production are \$5.7 million and \$4 million respectively.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)045

Question Serial No.

0637

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Are there any staff allocated for assisting farmers to explore suitable marketing channels for organic agricultural products? Does the Vegetable Marketing Organization provide such services?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department organizes training for farmers on marketing strategies and planning, and assists them to explore direct sales channels such as "Pick Your Own" and Weekend Farmers Market. The Department also works closely with the Vegetable Marketing Organization to promote local produce to various retail outlets, such as schools and welfare organizations.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)046

Question Serial No.

0638

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Please set out the details of the number, area and licensing capacity of each of the existing pig farms and chicken farms.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

There are currently 43 licensed pig farms and 30 licensed chicken farms in Hong Kong. The farm shed area and the licensed rearing capacity of each of these farms are provided at Annex.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 13 March 2009

Pig Farms			Chicken Farms		
Arbitrary Reference Number	Farm Shed Area (m ²)	Licensed Rearing Capacity (Nos.)	Arbitrary Reference Number	Farm Shed Area (m ²)	Licensed Rearing Capacity (Nos.)
1	691	500	1	433	10,000
2	1,611	950	2	708	18,000
3	2,408	2,000	3	2,597	50,000
4	4,953	4,000	4	387	10,000
5	558	800	5	648	20,000
6	1,281	600	6	724	19,900
7	4,248	3,000	7	975	20,000
8	389	350	8	569	25,000
9	707	1,000	9	682	19,000
10	1,143	600	10	2,329	35,000
11	5,086	1,500	11	775	20,000
12	3,130	1,500	12	1,336	39,000
13	938	850	13	2,005	41,000
14	1,864	600	14	4,519	48,000
15	2,594	2,000	15	4,478	102,000
16	3,914	3,000	16	3,226	108,000
17	2,640	2,600	17	948	18,000
18	2,601	2,000	18	2,623	70,000
19	2,146	1,600	19	2,945	62,800
20	385	300	20	1,569	38,500
21	2,007	1,000	21	758	26,000
22	1,726	1,900	22	8,442	162,300
23	839	1,500	23	4,832	80,000
24	1,709	1,500	24	1,563	48,000
25	1,612	1,000	25	1,138	48,000
26	2,960	3,500	26	873	27,000
27	1,328	1,000	27	1,610	26,000
28	2,101	2,000	28	1,656	36,000
29	3,699	1,800	29	1,251	42,000
30	6,346	6,000	30	1,068	31,000
31	4,525	2,600			
32	3,459	2,500			
33	1,375	1,200			
34	1,239	1,500			
35	2,860	1,500			
36	557	250			
37	1,392	1,990			
38	627	450			
39	1,923	1,500			
40	7,109	4,000			
41	4,106	3,000			
42	3,206	2,000			
43	1,181	1,200			
Total:	101,173	74,640	Total:	57,667	1,300,500

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)047

Question Serial No.

0639

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What is the number of licensed non-farm poultry keepers? Please give information on the maximum licensing capacity.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The Administration banned the keeping of backyard poultry in February 2006 as a preventive measure against avian influenza. However, having considered the special circumstances that some people had already kept poultry as pets prior to the ban, exemption permits were issued to them for keeping the pet poultry. There are at present 35 exemption permits. We also issued licences for keeping poultry for exhibition purpose and there are at present 56 exhibition licences.

Each exemption permit holder is allowed to keep no more than 20 poultry. As for exhibition licence, the holding capacity for each licence depends on the area of the premises, calculated according to the stocking density for each type of animal (i.e. 0.0747m² per chicken; 0.093m² per layer; 0.075m² per pigeon; 0.0093m² per quail; 2.52m² per pig and 0.023m² per duck/goose as stipulated in Schedule 2 of the Public Health (Animal and Birds) (Licensing of Livestock Keeping) Regulation (Cap. 139L).

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)048

Question Serial No.

0640

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In connection with stray animal management, please provide the following information:

- (a) The number of stray animals caught over the past three years (2006-08) by species.
- (b) How stray animals are treated by the Government over the past three years (2006-08) by species.
- (c) The staffing and amount of expenditure involved in stray animal management in 2009-10.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

- (a) The types and number of stray animals caught by Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) are as follows:

Year	Dog	Cat	Cattle
2006	8 582	5 063	120
2007	9 031	4 924	63
2008	8 375	4 642	45

- (b) Generally speaking and health conditions permitting, stray dogs and cats captured by AFCD will be kept at an AFCD Animal Management Centre for four days, pending possible retrieval by their owners. Arrangements will be made for unclaimed dogs and cats which are found to be healthy and with good temperament to be re-homed through animal welfare organizations collaborating with AFCD. Animals that could not be re-homed will be euthanized.

Stray cattle caught by AFCD will also be kept in an AFCD Animal Management Centre and the public will be notified by gazette. If the cattle is not reclaimed by its owner within seven days of notice, arrangements will be made for the cattle to be sold.

- (c) In 2009-10, an estimated amount of \$30 million has been earmarked, and a total of 104 staff (including one Senior Veterinary Officer, four Veterinary Officers, 19 Field Officers, 15 Field Assistants, 53 Workman Is and 12 Drivers) are involved, in the management of stray animals. The aforementioned staff are also tasked with other duties related to general animal management issues.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)049

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

0642

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

- a. During 2008-09, how much progress was made by the Department in implementing the notification scheme for food importers and distributors? What is the number of food importers and distributors registered under the scheme, and how much in percentage terms does it account for the total number of food importers and distributors?
- b. Does the Department have any plan to expedite the implementation of the scheme? Has provision been earmarked for this purpose in 2009-10 and if yes, what is the amount involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The Pre-statutory Voluntary Registration Scheme for Food Importers/Distributors has been extended to cover all categories of food in 2008-09. Up to 4.3.2009, around 1 500 importers and 1 700 distributors have registered under the Scheme, representing 35.5% of the estimated number of food importers. The percentage of distributors registered vis-à-vis their total number cannot be provided as the latter information is not available.

To enhance participation in the Scheme, the Department has deployed a designated team to reach out to traders. The full-year cost for this measure is estimated to be \$0.37 million for 2009-10.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)050

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Question Serial No.

Subhead (No. & title) :

0643

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Given the existing facilities of the control point at Man Kam To, what is the maximum number of vehicles carrying live and fresh food inspected each day? What are the staff establishment and expenditure of the Control Office?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

About 250 vehicles carrying live food animals and fresh food are inspected daily at the Man Kam To Control Point.

The Man Kam To Control Point has an establishment of 77 posts, comprising veterinary officers, health inspectors, field officers and assistants, clerical officers, workmen and drivers.

The estimated expenditure for import control for food (\$88.8 million) and live animals (\$17.8 million) is \$106.6 million in 2009-10. The resources provided for Man Kam To Control Point alone cannot be separately identified.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)051

Question Serial No.

0644

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Does the Department have any plan to improve the facilities of the control point at Man Kam To so as to increase the number of vehicles to be inspected. If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons? Is there any new initiative to substantially increase the number of food samples to be taken for testing at the border?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

Two projects are underway to improve the inspection and sampling capacities at the Man Kam To Control Point. One project will provide a vehicle holding area and four parking spaces with inspection facilities to enhance food surveillance on live food animals and poultry. The project is estimated for completion in mid 2010. The other project will provide 17 carpark spaces with inspection facilities and six carpark spaces for detention of food vehicles. The project is estimated for completion in end 2012. The Department will increase the number of food sample tests when the situation warrants.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **W H CHEUK** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **17.3.2009** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)052

Question Serial No.

0645

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

What is the current expenditure on subsidising the management of cremation facilities? How much in percentage terms does it account for the total management expenses?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

In 2008-09, the estimated total expenditure in providing crematorium and columbarium services is \$143 million, and the estimated revenue collected is \$53 million. The estimated deficit is therefore \$90 million, or 63% of the total expenditure. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of the expenditure on the management of cremation facilities alone.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)053

Question Serial No.

0646

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the specific plans for reprovisioning and construction of cremation facilities, and the expenditure involved.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The Wo Hop Shek Crematorium will be reprovisioned at an estimated cost of \$686.3 million for constructing six new cremators and other ancillary facilities. Works are expected to commence in July 2009 for phased completion in late 2011/early 2012. We are also planning to redevelop Cape Collinson Crematorium to provide for ten new cremators. Details and expenditure are being worked out.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)054

Question Serial No.

0647

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the expenditure and staffing involved in the provision of pest control services over the past 3 years (i.e. from 2006-07 to 2008-09) and in 2009-10.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

Both in-house and contractor staff are engaged in the provision of pest control services. The expenditure and staffing involved are as follows –

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Expenditure (\$ million)</u>	<u>Total No. of Staff</u>
2006-07	392	2 300
2007-08	385	2 300
2008-09	410	2 300
2009-10	437	2 230

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **W H CHEUK** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **17.3.2009** _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)055

Question Serial No.

0648

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Apart from the regular anti-mosquito and anti-rodent programmes, will there be any new initiatives on pest control in 2009-10? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

In 2009-10, we will launch new district-specific publicity and educational programmes to promote greater community involvement in rodent control and prevention, in addition to our regular pest control work and annual territory-wide publicity campaigns. Such district-specific programmes will include area/estate-specific educational activities organised in partnership with area committees, residents' associations and property management companies and other smaller-scale area/estate-specific publicity events. The resources involved will be subsumed under the total expenditure for pest control.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)056

Question Serial No.

0649

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the number of unallocated niches under the management of the Department, their distribution by location and the average waiting time for niche applicants. Is there any concrete plan for the expansion or construction of columbaria facilities, and what is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

As at end February 2009, there are 23 323 niches (23 250 new and 73 vacated ones) available for allocation in the eight public columbaria under the management of the Department, with 31 niches in Hong Kong, 18 512 niches in Kowloon and 4 780 niches in the New Territories (including 1 388 niches in the Islands District). These include 3 200 new niches in the Kwai Chung Columbarium and 18 500 new niches in the Diamond Hill Columbarium. Allocation of the new niches in the Kwai Chung Columbarium after balloting is now in progress and that for the Diamond Hill Columbarium will commence in the second quarter of 2009. For applicants queuing for vacated niches, the waiting time is about 12 to 52 months. For these cases, applicants having special preferences for a particular columbarium may have to wait longer. Also, applicants for vacated niches may concurrently apply for new niches when they are open for balloting, and their waiting time would depend on the availability of new niches.

We are planning to build new columbarium facilities providing for about 37 000 niches and a Garden of Remembrance at the Wo Hop Shek Cemetery for completion by around 2012. Details and the estimated cost of the project are being worked out. Separately, we are exploring the feasibility of constructing more Gardens of Remembrance at existing public cemeteries. There are suitable sites in the New Territories for constructing columbarium facilities, but such developments could only be realized with the support of the District Councils and the local community.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)057

Question Serial No.

0650

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

At present, how many licences in respect of private swimming pools have been issued by the Department? What is the frequency of inspections conducted to each of these private swimming pools on average? How many cases of irregularities concerning water quality, number of lifeguards and other issues were found in private swimming pools and how many prosecutions were instituted over the past 3 years (i.e. from 2006 to 2008)?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

As at 31.12.2008, the number of private swimming pools licences issued by the Department was 1 000.

Private swimming pools are inspected monthly from April to October or such other periods as the pools are open for use. From 2006 to 2008, we detected six cases of unsatisfactory water quality, one case of inadequate provision of lifeguards and five cases of effecting alteration of premises without permission in private swimming pools, resulting in 11 prosecutions and the issue of one warning letter.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)058

Question Serial No.

0651

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please set out in a table the number of stalls and vacant stalls in each market and cooked food centre.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The information sought is provided at Annex.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

No. of stalls and vacant stalls in FEHD public markets (as at 31.12.2008)

Serial No.	Name of Market	Total No. of stalls	No. of vacant stalls (No. of stalls frozen*)
1.	Yue Wan Market cum Cooked Food Centre	382	86
2.	Chai Wan Market cum Cooked Food Centre	173	24
3.	Java Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	194	61
4.	Causeway Bay Market	51	12
5.	Electric Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	96	28
6.	Sai Wan Ho Market cum Cooked Food Centre	267	77
7.	Quarry Bay Market cum Cooked Food Centre	115	35
8.	Shau Kei Wan Market	82	30
9.	North Point Market	42	12
10.	Aldrich Bay Market cum Cooked Food Centre	71	21
11.	Bowrington Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	296	32
12.	Tang Lung Chau Market	59	43(43)
13.	Wong Nai Chung Market cum Cooked Food Centre	66	12
14.	Lockhart Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	166	25
15.	Wan Chai Market	50	9
16.	Bridges Street Market	27	19(19)
17.	Sheung Wan Market cum Cooked Food Centre	226	36(4)
18.	Sai Ying Pun Market	102	19(4)
19.	Centre Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	80	51(51)
20.	Smithfield Market cum Cooked Food Centre	218	23(4)
21.	Shek Tong Tsui Market cum Cooked Food Centre	153	58(2)
22.	Aberdeen Market cum Cooked Food Centre	336	47
23.	Tin Wan Market cum Cooked Food Centre	171	20
24.	Yue Kwong Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	192	20

25.	Ap Lei Chau Marekt cum Cooked Food Centre	59	3
26.	Stanley Waterfront Mart	20	0
27.	Tai O Market	26	10
28.	Peng Chau Market	41	25
29.	Mui Wo Market	33	4
30.	Cheung Chau Market	237	24
31.	Ngau Tau Kok Market cum Cooked Food Centre	466	85
32.	Shui Wo Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	304	79
33.	Yee On Street Market	63	21
34.	Lei Yue Mun Market	18	4
35.	To Kwa Wan Market cum Cooked Food Centre	267	67
36.	Kowloon City Market cum Cooked Food Centre	582	90
37.	Hung Hom Market cum Cooked Food Centre	224	17
38.	On Ching Road Flower Market	13	0
39.	Ngau Chi Wan Market cum Cooked Food Centre	404	103
40.	Choi Hung Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	116	14(2)
41.	Tai Shing Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	457	69
42.	Sheung Fung Street Market	73	22
43.	Fa Yuen Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	188	45(9)
44.	Mong Kok Market	128	80(80)
45.	Tai Kok Tsui Market cum Cooked Food Centre	135	46
46.	Po On Road Market cum Cooked Food Centre	477	157(157)
47.	Pei Ho Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	227	10
48.	Tung Chau Street Temporary Market	359	172(157)
49.	Lai Wan Market	41	1
50.	Haiphong Road Temporary Market	96	17
51.	Kwun Chung Market cum Cooked Food Centre	216	69
52.	Yau Ma Tei Market	131	41
53.	Kimberley Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	19	0

54.	Wing Fong Street Market	112	37(37)
55.	North Kwai Chung Market	222	40
56.	Tsing Yi Market	74	12
57.	Yeung Uk Road Market	320	31
58.	Heung Che Street Market cum Cooked Food Centre	223	54
59.	Tsuen Wan Market	382	81(1)
60.	Sham Tseng Temporary Market cum Cooked Food Centre	36	19
61.	Tsuen King Circuit Market	241	129
62.	Lam Tei Market	7	0
63.	Kwong Choi Market	81	65(55)
64.	San Hui Market	324	61
65.	Yan Oi Market	107	18
66.	Kam Tin Market cum Cooked Food Centre	41	10
67.	Lau Fau Shan Market	25	5
68.	Tai Kiu Market	378	114
69.	Hung Shui Kiu Temporary Market	215	106(106)
70.	Tung Yick Market	448	236(236)
71.	Sha Tau Kok Market cum Cooked Food Centre	64	8
72.	Shek Wu Hui Market cum Cooked Food Centre	392	11
73.	Kwu Tung Market Shopping Centre cum Cooked Food Centre	98	2
74.	Luen Wo Hui Market cum Cooked Food Centre	338	74(37)
75.	Tai Po Hui Market Market cum Cooked Food Centre	315	21
76.	Plover Cove Road Market	243	65
77.	Sai Kung Market	207	27
78.	Tui Min Hoi Market	34	0
79.	Sha Tin Market	174	20
80.	Tai Wai Market	196	23
81.	Kut Shing Street Cooked Food Market	11	0
82.	Queen Street Cooked Food Market	13	3
83.	Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market	28	2
84.	Mui Wo Cooked Food Market	20	0
85.	Cheung Chau Cooked Food Market	17	1

86.	Tsun Yip Cooked Food Market	56	1
87.	Kwun Tong Ferry Concourse Cooked Food Market	29	6
88.	Sze Shan Street Cooked Food Market	17	3
89.	Tung Yuen Street Cooked Food Market	8	1
90.	Mong Kok Cooked Food Market	14	2
91.	Cheung Sha Wan Cooked Food Market	28	16(16)
92.	Ka Ting Cooked Food Market	17	5
93.	Tai Yuen Street Cooked Food Market	20	14
94.	Wo Yi Hop Road Cooked Food Market	18	3
95.	Cheung Tat Road Cooked Food Market	12	1
96.	Kwai Shun Street Cooked Food Market	12	1
97.	Chai Wan Kok Cooked Food Market	32	6
98.	Hung Cheung Cooked Food Market	11	3
99.	Kin Wing Cooked Food Market	20	8
100.	Tsing Yeung Cooked Food Market	18	3
101.	Kik Yeung Road Cooked Food Market	14	0
102.	Tai Tong Road Cooked Food Market	18	0
103.	Kin Yip Street Cooked Food Market	14	0
104.	Fo Tan Cooked Food Market (East)	24	0
105.	Fo Tan Cooked Food Market (West)	15	3

* Figure in bracket refers to the number of stalls frozen due to impending market redevelopment or improvement works.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)059

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

0652

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please set out in a table the number of markets and cooked food centres whose actual rental is 0-10%, 11-20%, and so forth, of the open market rental.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The information sought is provided in the table at Annex.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

W H CHEUK

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

17.3.2009

Annex

**Actual rental compared to Open Market Rental of leased stalls
in all FEHD public markets and cooked food centres (as at 31.12.2008)**

Actual Rent as % of Open Market Rental	No. of Stalls
10% or below	175
11%-20%	163
21%-30%	545
31%-40%	1 209
41%-50%	1 295
51%-60%	1 333
61%-70%	1 556
71%-80%	1 271
81%-90%	840
91% or above	3 005
	11 392

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)060

Question Serial No.

1271

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will give emphasis to assisting farmers to capture high-value-market niches by providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production. Please provide the respective figures of the actual expenditure and manpower required in 2008-09 and the estimated expenditure and manpower in 2009-10. What were the respective numbers of organic farms in the last 3 years? Please give information on the market share and price trend of local organic produce respectively during the last 3 years.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

In 2009-10, about 16 staff and \$5.7 million are allocated to promote organic farming, and another 10 staff and \$4.0 million are allocated to promote intensive greenhouse production. The same level of resources has been earmarked for 2008-09. The number of organic farms in Hong Kong in 2006, 2007 and 2008 was 71, 106 and 123 respectively. Given its small production base, local organic vegetable production accounts for about 0.2% of the fresh vegetables consumed during the last 3 years. During the same period, the average wholesale price of local organic vegetables has risen from \$5,483 to \$9,200 per ton.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 13 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)061

Question Serial No.

0832

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

It is indicated in Programme 3 that the Administration will tighten the control on the sources of dogs offered for sale in pet shops by revising the conditions of the Animal Trader Licence in 2009-10. Please provide details on such measures, the amount of expenditure involved and the timetable for implementation.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) plans to strengthen the control on the sources of dogs offered for sale in local pet shops by amending the licensing conditions for animal traders before end 2009.

Under the revised conditions, all dogs kept by animal traders in licensed premises must come from one of the following approved sources:-

- (i) dogs covered by valid import permits/special permits issued by AFCD and accompanied by valid health certificates issued by the veterinary authority of the exporting place;
- (ii) dogs acquired from licensed animal traders (including breeders) and are covered by proper documentation such as invoice and sale receipt; or
- (iii) dogs acquired from bona fide pet owners.

A provision of \$4.26 million has been earmarked in 2009-10 for activities relating to animal business licensing, including implementation of the revised licensing conditions for animal traders.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)062

Question Serial No.

0844

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

- (a) Regarding stray animals caught, please list out the number of animals euthanized and re-homed over the past 3 years, namely 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09.
- (b) Regarding stray animals caught, please provide information on the actual expenditure in 2007-08, revised estimate of expenditure in 2008-09 and estimated expenditure in 2009-10.
- (c) In 2008-09, what was the cost of each euthanization administered?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

- (a) The types and number of stray animals caught, re-homed and euthanized by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 are as follows:

No. of stray animals caught

Year	Dog	Cat	Cattle
2006-07	8 996	5 022	153
2007-08	8 583	4 881	36
2008-09 (up to February 2009)	7 636	4 077	30

No. of animals re-homed

Year	Dog	Cat
2006-07	640	133
2007-08	582	99
2008-09 (up to February 2009)	606	146

No. of stray animals euthanized

Year	Dog	Cat
2006-07	6 636	4 266
2007-08	6 585	3 833
2008-09 (up to February 2009)	5 742	3 246

- (b) The actual expenditure in 2007-08, revised estimate of expenditure in 2008-09 and estimated expenditure in 2009-10 in handling with stray animals caught and animals voluntarily surrendered by their owners are as follows:

	2007-08 (actual expenditure)	2008-09 (revised estimate)	2009-10 (estimate)
Expenditure on capturing, keeping and euthanizing stray animals caught and animals voluntarily surrendered by their owners	\$30 million	\$30 million	\$30 million

- (c) In 2008-09, the cost of euthanizing animals was about \$1.5 million. The average cost for euthanizing one animal is about \$100.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)063

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1223

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In 2009-10, how much resources will be allocated to identify markets with consistently high vacancy rates and deficits for closure? Please advise on the details of the work plan and when the work will be completed.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Hok-ming

Reply :

We will employ 76 temporary staff to conduct utilization and patron opinion surveys on public markets by batches in 2009-10 at an estimated expenditure of \$8 million. The surveys are intended to collect patronage information on individual markets, as well as tenants' and customers' views on possible market improvement measures. The surveys will also assist in identifying markets with consistently high vacancy rates and deficits and with low patronage that may be considered for closure. They will commence in March 2009. We will present the findings of the surveys to the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene in mid-2009.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)064

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1224

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The Department will consider further extending the scheme on contracting out market management to other districts. Please advise on the progress, the estimated financial provision required for launching and implementing the scheme and the number of public markets currently covered by the scheme.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Hok-ming

Reply :

In 2009-10, we will contract out the management of eight markets in total in Tai Po District and Islands District in July and October respectively. After contracting out these eight markets, there will be a total of 65 public markets managed by contractors in the private sector.

We are not able to provide details on the financial provisions required as the tender exercise has yet to commence and the tender price is not known.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)065

Question Serial No.

1225

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In 2009-10, how much resources will be allocated for controlling and containing on-street hawking activities and obstruction caused by shop extensions? What arrangements will be made in taking enforcement actions?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Hok-ming

Reply :

As part of their enforcement duties, Hawker Control staff undertake daily patrol of hawker permitted places, conduct blitz operations at hawker blackspots, attend to complaints regarding illegal hawking and shop extensions, and also take part in joint operations with other government departments to address general street management problems. The resources spent on the control of hawking activities and enforcement against shop extension alone cannot be separately identified.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)066

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1226

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In view of the financial tsunami, will the Department allocate additional resources for controlling and containing on-street hawking activities and obstruction caused by shop extensions? If yes, please provide the details. If not, please give the reasons.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Hok-ming

Reply :

We do not observe significant increase in illegal hawking or shop obstruction and will continue to deploy existing resources to control hawking activities and shop extensions.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)067

Question Serial No.

1295

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the number of applications for transfer of restaurant licences, the average time required for processing the applications as well as the number of applications withdrawn in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2006, 2007 and 2008, there were 781, 716 and 609 applications respectively for transfer of restaurant licences; and among them, 17, 18 and 15 cases were withdrawn respectively. The average time for processing the applications in 2006 – 2008 was 46 working days.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **W H CHEUK** _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)068

Question Serial No.

1296

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the number of submissions of revised layout plans by restaurant licensees and the average time required for processing the submissions in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2006, 2007 and 2008, there were 567, 864 and 728 applications respectively for alteration to the approved layout of licensed restaurants. We do not keep statistics of the processing time for these applications. The time required to process such applications depends on many factors, including the complexity of individual cases, the quality of proposed layout plans (with alterations) submitted by the licensees, time required by relevant departments to comment on the applications, and efforts made by the licensees to comply with stipulated licensing requirements.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)069

Question Serial No.

1297

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the average time required for processing restaurant licence applications in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The average processing time for issuing a full restaurant licence in 2006, 2007 and 2008 was 202, 194 and 168 working days respectively. The corresponding processing time for issuing a provisional restaurant licence was 56, 54 and 45 working days.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **W H CHEUK**

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)070

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1300

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the number of applications by restaurant licensees for outside seating accommodation, the average time required for processing the applications as well as the number of applications withdrawn in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2006, 2007 and 2008, there were 57, 67 and 71 applications respectively for outside seating accommodation (OSA). Depending on the location, scale and other aspects of such applications, their approval required consultation with and agreement of Buildings Department, Fire Services Department, Planning Department, Home Affairs Department, Lands Department, and Transport Department. The average processing time of an OSA application during the period from 2006 to 2008 was about 16 months. The number of withdrawn/abandoned cases in 2006, 2007 and 2008 was 13, 11 and 45 respectively.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

W H CHEUK

Post Title _____

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____

17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)071

Question Serial No.

1022

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the conduct of adaptive and technical studies, what kinds of studies will be carried out in 2009-10? Please provide the names of the studies and their yearly estimated expenditures.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The adaptive and technical studies conducted will include improving crop growing methods, preventing diseases and pests, selecting suitable crop varieties for local production, and introducing environmentally controlled greenhouse technology to local farmers for raising their productivity and quality of production.

As regards fisheries, we will conduct adaptive and technical studies for developing fish fry production techniques for culture species such as Jade Perch and Green Grouper, developing organic fish farming, and selecting suitable new fish species for culture to help fish farmers improve the quality and competitiveness of their products.

In 2009-10, a provision of about \$23 million has been allocated to the above areas of work.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)072

Question Serial No.

1023

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the introduction of modern technology and practices to local farmers and fishermen, how many such technologies and practices were introduced to them in 2007-08 and 2008-09? Please list out the relevant items.

After the introduction of modern technology and practices, will there be any assessment on the number of farmers and fishermen adopting them? If yes, what were the adoption rates for the past two financial years?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

In 2007-08 and 2008-09, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department conducted adaptive and technical studies to (a) improve crop growing methods, (b) prevent diseases and pests, (c) select suitable crop varieties for local production, and (d) introduce environmentally controlled greenhouse technology to local farmers to raise their productivity and quality of production. All the above production technology and practices have been regularly extended to local farmers through seminars, workshops and on-farm visits under our Voluntary Registration Scheme, Accredited Vegetable Farm Scheme and Organic Farming Support Service. As at 31 December 2008, over 99% or 1993 farmers have joined our Voluntary Registration Scheme. Out of this total, 215 have joined the Accredited Vegetable Farm Scheme and 123 have joined the Organic Farming Support Service.

As regards fisheries, we (a) introduced techniques for culture of new fish species and fish fry production, (b) extended good husbandry practices, including proper farm management, water quality monitoring, feeding of fish and fish disease prevention and control, as well as (c) continued to promote the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme to local fish farmers to help them raise their production standards and enhance the quality of their cultured fish. Through our efforts, the majority of fish farmers have adopted good husbandry practices and some 80 fish farmers have joined the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme. In addition, six fish farmers have started culturing the newly introduced species, Jade Perch, and some are venturing into setting up small-scale fish hatchery.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)073

Question Serial No.

1024

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The estimated number of fisheries new loans for 2009 is 620, representing a substantial decrease of 229 from the actual number in 2008. Please state the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The larger number of loans issued in 2008 is mainly due to the provision of extra small loans to fishermen affected by the fishing moratorium in the South China Sea for coping with the unprecedented high fuel prices in 2008. As fuel prices have already come down substantially from the peak, we do not expect to make similar arrangements and hence receive the same large number of loan applications in 2009.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 18 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)074

Question Serial No.

1118

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The revised estimate for 2008-09 is 41.8% lower than the original estimate for 2008-09. Please explain the reason(s) for the reduction?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The decrease of \$14.1 million (41.8%) in 2008-09 revised estimate for Programme (2) : Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 original estimate is mainly due to savings in the funds earmarked for controlling zoonotic diseases.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)075

Question Serial No.

1119

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

There is an increase of 240.3% in the estimate for 2009-10 in comparison with the revised estimate for 2008-09, so as to "strengthen food safety protection and prevent zoonotic diseases", etc. In this connection, please set out the fund allocations and details of the items.

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The increase of \$47.1 million (240.3%) in 2009-10 estimate for Programme (2): Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 revised estimate is mainly attributable to the following-

	<u>\$ million</u>
(a) Reserve for conducting various surveys and studies on nutrition labeling and enhancing publicity on food safety matters	8.0
(b) Provision for promoting the accreditation of private laboratories for developing Hong Kong into a food testing hub and outsourcing of food tests	15.0
(c) Provision for meeting unexpected expenditure like controlling zoonotic diseases and coping with food incidents	19.0
(d) Provisions for the net increase of two posts and increases in other operating expenses	5.1
Total:	47.1

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)076

Question Serial No.

1120

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

There will be an "increase of two posts", but under the Programme, only the details of one post are mentioned. Please state the scope of duties of the other one.

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

Two four-year time-limited posts including one Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) post and one Personal Secretary I (PSI) post are proposed to be created under Programme (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety in 2009-10. The AOSGB will strengthen directorate support for taking forward various legislation relating to food safety and food standards, including the Food Safety Bill, whereas the PSI will provide secretarial support to the AOSGB post.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date _____ 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)077

Question Serial No.

1041

Head: 139 – Government
Secretariat: Food and
Health Bureau (Food
Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the work to continue to collaborate with the Mainland Authorities to explore the feasibility of applying information technology to enhance the traceability of food, would the Administration advise on the results of the trial programme conducted in 2008 and the outcome of the latest research? Will a new information technology system be introduced? What are the estimated manpower and resources required?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

FHB and FEHD are working in collaboration with the Mainland authorities on a pilot programme to apply Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology on a traceability scheme on live pigs imported from Guangdong Province. In 2008, the programme primarily focused on the testing of the reliability of hand-held detectors and the computer software. In 2009, the test will focus on the reliability of the passageway reader device. This will be followed by the testing of the entire system. The feasibility of applying RFID technology to live pigs imported from other provinces and other foods will be explored in collaboration with the Mainland authorities.

FEHD has, so far, spent about \$0.2 million for purchasing equipment such as the hand-held detectors and computer software, and about \$0.8 million on additional manpower for operating the equipment and testing exercises. It has also committed about \$3 million for further development of the pilot project in 2009-10.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Stella HUNG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Food and
Health (Food)

Date _____ 16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)078

Question Serial No.

1042

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau (Food
Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The Administration will continue to develop proposals to prevent avian influenza outbreak. In this regard, what are the specific work plan and time table for 2009-2010? What are the estimated manpower and resources required?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

Whilst the Food and Health Bureau formulates policies relating to the prevention of avian influenza outbreak, the relevant measures are implemented by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). The measures to be implemented by these two departments in 2009-10 include –

- (a) monitoring and surveillance of local poultry farms and wholesale market;
- (b) ensuring effective implementation of necessary improvements to the biosecurity standards and measures of local poultry farms as well as rendering assistance and guidance to farmers to help them adapt to the new measures;
- (c) working together with experts to conduct research and tests on the efficacy of the existing avian influenza vaccine for poultry and to study the effectiveness of alternative vaccines;
- (d) inspection of poultry farms in the Mainland and liaison with the Mainland authorities to ensure that requirements on animal health, quarantine and farm conditions are complied with;
- (e) inspection of every consignment of imported poultry, including verifying Animal Health Certificates and collecting blood samples and cloacal swabs for laboratory testing of avian influenza H5;
- (f) enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry;
- (g) enforcement of no overnight stocking of live poultry at retail outlets;
- (h) monitoring and inspection of poultry retail outlets and pet bird shops;
- (i) collection of dead wild birds for avian influenza testing;
- (j) maintaining comprehensive surveillance by engaging a local university to take environmental swabs for analysis; and
- (k) carrying out public education and publicity programme on avian influenza preventive measures.

A combined provision of \$62.3 million has been earmarked by the two departments in 2009-10 for the above work.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)
Date	13.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)079

Question Serial No.

1043

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the continuous promotion of sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries, please provide the following information:

- (a) A comparison of the amount of provision from the Government, the details of the plans and the staff establishment for promoting organic farming between 2008-09 and 2009-10;
- (b) The efficacy of the plans in 2008-09 and the targets set for 2009-10;
- (c) The number of farms currently used for organic farming and the projected increase in the number of organic farms and farmers in 2009-10;
- (d) The projected increase in market share of organic farm products in 2009-10; and
- (e) Whether additional resources will be allocated to provide more technical support to the industries, and if yes, please state the details and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

- (a) In 2008-09, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) promoted local organic produce emphasizing quality, safety and environmental protection. New or improved vegetable varieties were introduced to stimulate market demand and capture high end markets for better economic returns. In addition, AFCD organized regular promotional activities and exhibitions to promote local organic produce. A total of 16 staff and \$5.7 million were allocated to these tasks in 2008-09. The same manpower and financial resources have been earmarked for these tasks in 2009-10.
- (b) &(c) With the above measures, we have seen significant improvement in the quantity, variety and quality of local organic vegetables. The number of local organic farms has also increased from 106 in 2007 to 123 in 2008. The development of local organic farming is market driven and the Government does not set a target on the number of local organic farms.

- (d) At present local organic farms together produce about four tonnes of organic vegetables per day. The Government has not made any projection of the market share of local organic farm products.
- (e) Please refer to (a).

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 18 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)080

Question Serial No.

1044

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau (Food Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the continuous development of a Poultry Slaughtering Centre, what are the present progress of the **tendering** exercise and the preparation work? What are the manpower and resources involved in this initiative?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

To minimize the risk of avian influenza outbreak, implementation of central slaughtering is an important initiative in Government's policy of segregating live poultry from humans. A substantial number of live poultry traders have ceased business under the Buyout Scheme launched for the live poultry trade in 2008. Following the conclusion of the Scheme, the exact number of traders remaining is now available for finalising the key parameters of the Poultry Slaughtering Centre (PSC), including the scale of the facility.

The Administration is proceeding with the preparatory work on the development of the PSC, including the environmental impact assessment and land-use rezoning where the two statutory approval processes would be conducted in parallel. We would also conduct a study to assess the best mode of operation and ascertain market interests in operating the PSC. We expect that the PSC would come into operation in 2011/12.

The estimated capital expenditure involved is currently being assessed. The work involved in taking forward this initiative will be absorbed by existing manpower of the Food and Health Bureau.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs Stella HUNG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)
Date	16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)081

Question Serial No.

1045

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

As for the implementation of measures to meet the increasing demand for public columbarium and crematorium facilities, please provide the following information:

- (a) the programme details and the staffing provision for 2009-2010;
- (b) a comparison of the total provision under this Programme between 2008-2009 and 2009-2010; and
- (c) the direction and the resources required in the long run.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

- (a) and (b) The project cost of constructing 3 200 niches in the Kwai Chung Columbarium and another 18 500 niches in the Diamond Hill Columbarium by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) was \$14.8 million and \$113.6 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices respectively. Construction works for these two projects have been largely completed. The new niches in the Kwai Chung Columbarium are being allocated through balloting, and the application for the new niches in the Diamond Hill Columbarium will commence in the second quarter of 2009.

The FEHD is planning to build new public columbarium facilities providing for about 37 000 niches and a Garden of Remembrance at the Wo Hop Shek Cemetery for completion by around 2012. We will consult the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the project when details and the estimated expenditure have been worked out. Separately, we are exploring the feasibility of constructing more Gardens of Remembrance at existing public cemeteries.

To meet the demand for crematorium services, the Wo Hop Shek Crematorium and the Cape Collinson Crematorium will be reprovisioned to provide for six and 10 new cremators respectively. The Wo Hop Shek Crematorium project will cost \$686.3 million in MOD prices, and the proposal was already endorsed by the Finance Committee on 13 February 2009. The

expenditure of the Cape Collinson Crematorium project is being worked out.

The work at the bureau level will be absorbed through existing resources.

- (c) The support of the Legislative Council, local residents and relevant district councils remains essential to the Government's provision of public columbarium and crematorium facilities. To meet the demand for these facilities, we will continue to seek to upgrade public cremators by phases to increase their handling capacity and identify possible sites for public columbarium facilities.

In addition, we will continue to encourage the public to actively consider adopting alternative means for handling cremains of the deceased, including scattering the cremains at sea or in Gardens of Remembrance.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Stella HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food) _____

Date _____ 18.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)082

Question Serial No.

1036

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

As urgent testing requirements for urgent food samples relating to food incidents fluctuated widely in 2007 and 2008, it is difficult to estimate either the occurrence of this type of food incidents or the number of tests required in 2009 under this Programme. Has the Bureau earmarked sufficient resources to implement contingency measures including deployment of manpower and resources to handle this type of unexpected urgent testing requirements for food samples. If so, please provide details of these contingency measures and the manpower and resources involved? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

Food sample testing related to urgent food incidents varies in demand from year to year. The Government Laboratory plans to outsource some 77 000 food tests to the private sector during 2009-10, equivalent to about 50% of the routine food tests in the fiscal year. The resources so released, including six professional staff and ten technical staff will be re-deployed for the development of new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conducting testing work involving litigation, and assisting in contract management. The resources released will also be re-deployed to conduct food testing in relation to all urgent food incidents.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 19.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)083

Question Serial No.

1037

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under this Programme, 163 000 tests will be performed on other food samples in 2009, representing a substantial increase of 39 945 tests over the actual number of tests performed in 2008. Please advise:

- (a) whether the Administration will deal with the increased number of tests by outsourcing the routine food testing work to the commercial sector, if not, whether the Administration has sufficient manpower and resources to cope with the increase in the number of tests, please provide the details;
- (b) how the quality of work is guaranteed and the expenditure involved in case where routine food testing work is outsourced to the commercial sector.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The Government Laboratory is planning to outsource part of the routine food testing work (about 77 000 tests) to the private laboratories in 2009-2010. The resources thus released will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation and assist in contract management. Estimated expenditure for the outsourcing contract is about \$9 million.

Private laboratories undertaking outsourcing contracts from the Government Laboratory must have been accredited by the Hong Kong Accreditation Service under the Innovation and Technology Commission in the specific tests and must maintain the accreditation status throughout the contract period. During the contract period, Government Laboratory would implement a number of quality assurance measures including on-site audits and quality control means such as introduction of blind samples/split samples and control checks to monitor the performance of the contract laboratories including the quality of the test results.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)084

Question Serial No.

1038

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In the 2009-10 Budget, it is stated that the Administration will support the development of food testing services by providing reputable accreditation services for private laboratories, so as to help Hong Kong to develop into a food testing hub in the region. Please advise on the details of the work and its estimated expenditure.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The Hong Kong Accreditation Service under the Innovation and Technology Commission is responsible for providing accreditation service to private laboratories. The Innovation and Technology Commission strongly encourages private laboratories to obtain accreditation as laboratory accreditation gives assurance on the correctness and reliability of results to specific tests and calibration performed by a laboratory. The Hong Kong Accreditation Service will continue to provide assistance and support to private laboratories which are interested in obtaining accreditation. In this regard, an additional amount of \$1.6M per year will be provided to the Innovation and Technology Commission to strengthen its staffing support in the Hong Kong Accreditation Service and for promoting and enhancing its accreditation service.

In addition to supporting the laboratories through providing better and more efficient accreditation service through the Innovation and Technology Commission, the Government Laboratory will assist by promoting the upgrading of private laboratories by sharing testing methods with them as well as conducting technical seminars, proficiency tests and inter-laboratory comparison studies on a more regular basis. Furthermore, the Government Laboratory plans to outsource some 77 000 food tests to the private sector during 2009-10. The resources so released will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation, and assist in contract management. The outsourcing of testing work to the private sector will also provide more business opportunities for the private laboratories.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)085

Question Serial No.

1487

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Food safety has become an issue of grave concern following repeated inflow of problem food into Hong Kong in recent years. It is stated in the Estimates that the Government will further enhance the food safety efforts in Hong Kong. What are the specific measures? Will the Government step up inspection of imported food? If yes, what are the size of extra manpower and the amount of additional complementary resources required in 2009-10? What is the expenditure involved? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

A proactive three-prong approach involving routine, targeted and seasonal food surveillance has been adopted by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) since 2007. In planning the food surveillance programme, various factors including the risk of food items, consumption level, past surveillance data, and previous local/overseas food incidents are taken into consideration. In 2009, CFS will maintain this approach while more samples will be taken at import level. A financial provision of \$53.8 million is allocated to CFS in carrying out food surveillance in 2009-10, which is an increase of \$4 million over 2008-09. The manpower provided will be increased from 96 to 99 with the addition of three health inspectorate staff.

Government Laboratory provides testing and advisory service to support CFS' initiative in enhancing food safety control. The resources released from outsourcing part of the routine food testing work will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation and assist in contract management.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)086

Question Serial No.

1490

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What is the approximate proportion of routine food testing work to be outsourced to the commercial sector?
How will the manpower of the Government Laboratory originally responsible for the job be re-deployed?

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

In 2009-10, the Government Laboratory plans to outsource about 77 000 routine food tests to the private laboratories, which is equivalent to about 50% of the total routine food tests in the fiscal year. The resources thus released will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation and assist in contract management.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)087

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Question Serial No.

1491

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What are the ranks and job duties of the six posts newly created under Programme (1) and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

Six new posts, namely one Senior Chemist, two Chemists, one Science Laboratory Technician I and two Science Laboratory Technician II, will be created in the Government Laboratory for strengthening support to the enforcement of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance and subsidiary legislation made thereunder. The analytical services to be provided include authenticity tests of Fei Cui, diamond, and general consumer goods through application of chemical analysis, physical examination and/or biotechnology, and also analytical tests of precious metals and surface coating analysis of plated products. An annual provision of \$2,637,000 has been earmarked for carrying out the work concerned.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)088

Question Serial No.

1026

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

For food safety and public health services , there will be a net increase of 12 posts in 2009-10. Please set out the title of the posts to be created or deleted in 2009-10 and give reasons for creating or deleting these posts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The posts to be created are in the grades of Health Inspector, Scientific Officer (Medical), Pest Control Officer, Pest Control Assistant, Field Assistant, Laboratory Attendant and administration support grades. They are created to perform food safety regulatory duties and provide pest control services. The posts to be deleted are Workman II vacancies of which there is no operational need for retention.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)089

Question Serial No.

1027

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

For environmental hygiene and related services, there will be a net decrease of 11 posts in 2009-10. Please set out the title of the posts to be created or deleted in 2009-10 and give reasons for creating or deleting these posts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The posts to be created are in the grades of Health Inspector, Foreman and administration support grades. They are created to provide environmental hygiene and related services and to provide administration support.

The posts to be deleted are in the grades of Ganger, Workman I and Workman II. All are vacant posts of which there is no operational need for retention.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)090

Question Serial No.

1028

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (4) Public Education and Community Involvement

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

For public education and community involvement programmes, there will be a net increase of 2 posts in 2009-10. Please set out the title of the posts to be created or deleted in 2009-10 and give reasons for creating or deleting these posts.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The posts to be created are in the Clerical Officer grade for enhancing administration support to the Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre in organising promotional and educational activities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **W H CHEUK** _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)091

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1035

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (4) Public Education and Community Involvement

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, the estimated number of outreaching programmes targeted at schools to be organised in 2009 will remain unchanged, while the number of school talks, TV Announcements in the Public Interest and Radio Announcements in the Public Interest will be reduced. In this regard, how will the Department strengthen health promotional activities on nutrition labelling? Please advise on the plan, manpower arrangement and expenditure involved.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The Department will strengthen health promotion on nutrition labelling with an array of publicity and education activities to reach a wider audience and achieve a bigger impact. In addition to outreaching programmes targeting at schools, TV and Radio Announcements in the Public Interest, other major activities include the annual function "Food Safety Day 2009" featuring road show, game booths, exhibitions and radio broadcasting, radio/TV programmes, advertising campaign at MTR stations and bus shelters etc. A series of train-the-trainer workshops for stakeholders in the medical and education sectors will be conducted to enlist community support in promoting nutrition labelling. The promotion work is undertaken by existing staff and the expenditure cannot be separately identified.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)092

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1046

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, the estimated number of vehicles carrying vegetables to be inspected at Man Kam To Food Control Office in 2009 is 28 000, representing a decrease of 467 over the actual number in 2008. Please advise on the reasons for the decrease and the measures to be taken to ensure that the work of food surveillance will not be affected despite the decrease.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The planned number of vegetable vehicles to be inspected at Man Kam To Food Control Office is the same in 2008-09 and 2009-10 (i.e. 28 000 vehicles). To address public concern about possible food smuggling in late 2008, more inspections were conducted and the total number of inspections was therefore increased to 28 467. The estimate of 28 000 vegetable vehicles to be inspected in 2009 is appropriate for an average year.

The Centre for Food Safety and the Customs and Excise Department will as appropriate step up inspections on inbound food-carrying vehicles at the border checkpoints, including vegetables trucks at Man Kam To Control Point, to ensure food safety.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)093

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1047

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, the number of food samples to be taken for testing in 2009 is 65 000, representing a decrease of 1 726 over the actual number in 2008. Please advise on the reasons for the decrease and the effect on food safety surveillance.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The number of food samples to be tested under the food surveillance programme in 2008 had been planned to be 65 000. Due to the melamine incident in late 2008, more tests were conducted and a total of 66 726 samples were tested in the event. The estimate of 65 000 samples for 2009 is appropriate for an average year.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)094

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1048

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, the number of blood samples to be taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies in 2009 is 41 000, representing a decrease of 27 894 over the actual number in 2008. Please advise on the reasons for the decrease.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The estimated number of blood samples for 2009 is contingent on the estimated number of live poultry to be supplied from the Mainland. The usual daily import limit on live chickens came down from 20 000 in January 2008 to the current 7 000 chickens. This in turn reduces the number of blood samples that needs to be taken.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

W H CHEUK

Post Title _____

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____

17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)095

Question Serial No.

1049

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, there will be a net increase of 12 posts in the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in 2009-10. Please give details of the nature of work, rank and salaries of these posts.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The posts to be created are in the grades of Health Inspector, Scientific Officer (Medical), Pest Control Officer, Pest Control Assistant, Field Assistant, Laboratory Attendant and administration support grades. The total annual salary amounts to \$10.4 million. The main duties of these posts are to perform food safety regulatory duties and provide pest control services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)096

Question Serial No.

1571

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Regarding the issue of harmful food products from the Mainland, please advise on the specific measures for tracing the source of such products as well as the expenditure and manpower involved in 2009-10.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

When samples are tested unsatisfactory, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) will trace the source of the implicated food based on available information including invoices and health certificates. If the food is found to be imported, CFS will contact the relevant food authorities for investigation and other follow up actions.

A financial provision of \$142.6 million has been earmarked for food surveillance at import, wholesale and retail levels (\$53.8 million) and import control (\$88.8 million) from all sources in 2009-10. The manpower establishment of CFS in carrying out the above work is 280, including health inspectors, administration and supporting staff. The resources and manpower involved in source tracing of problem food alone cannot be separately identified.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)097

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1572

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Regarding the indicator for "blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies", the estimated number for 2009 is 41 000, representing a decrease of 27 894 over the actual number in 2008. Please advise on the reasons for the decrease.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The estimated number of blood samples for 2009 is contingent on the estimated number of live poultry to be supplied from the Mainland. The usual daily import limit on live chickens came down from 20 000 in January 2008 to the current 7 000 chickens. This in turn reduces the number of blood samples that needs to be taken.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)098

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1573

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

As rodent infestation has become a serious problem in various districts of the territory, has the Department reviewed the effectiveness of its current rodent control through poison treatments and trappings? If yes, what are the findings? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The Department adopts an integrated rodent control approach consisting of improvement to environmental conditions, application of poisonous bait and setting of traps. This approach is consistent with that as recommended by the World Health Organization. Rodent infestation is generally under control in Hong Kong. The rodent control materials and methodologies used by the Department are reviewed from time to time having regard to international developments and research.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)099

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

1574

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Will there be a review of the licensing policy for itinerant hawkers, and plans regarding bazaars to enable more grassroots citizens to start up their own business and become self-employed? If not, please give the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The Administration has reviewed the licensing policy for itinerant hawkers in the overall review of hawker licensing policy. The proposals have been discussed by the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on 10 February and 10 March 2009.

In recent years, members of the public have from time to time proposed the establishment of open-air bazaars rich in local characteristics at suitable sites. We are supportive of such proposals and stand ready to provide appropriate assistance (including licensing assistance) in collaboration with the relevant departments, as long as the identified sites have local support, including that of District Councils, and the proposals meet the requirements on food safety and environmental hygiene.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)100

Question Serial No.

1575

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please list the precise location of the 45 hawker blackspots.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The required information is provided at Annex.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Location of Hawker Blackspots

District	Location	
Central/Western	1. Vicinity of Statue Square and Legislative Council Building	
	2. Vicinity of Charter Garden and Murray Road	
	3. Footbridge along Connaught Road Central and vicinity	
Wan Chai	4. Wan Chai Road (between Johnston Road and Cross Street), Tai Yuen Street, Cross Street, Stone Nullah Lane (between Johnston Road and Cross Street) and the vicinity	
	5. Bowrington Road (between Hennessey Road and Sharp Street West) and Wan Chai Road (between Canal Road West and Tin Lok Lane)	
Eastern	6. Area near Chai Wan Market including the open space outside Walton Estate, Yee Shun Street, Yee Tai Street, Yee Fung Street and the lane in front of Winner Centre	
	7. Kam Wa Street area including Mong Lung Street and Tai Tak Street	
	8. Marble Road area including North Point MTR Exit, Kam Hong Street, Shu Kuk Street, a section of King's Road between Kam Hong Street and Tin Chiu Street and vicinity of Java Road Market	
	9. Chun Yeung Street area including North Point Road, Tong Shui Road, a section of King's Road around Kam Hong Street and Fortress Hill MTR Exits	
	10. Siu Sai Wan area along Siu Sai Wan Road from Bus Terminus up to Fullview Garden	
	11. Kut Shing Street and Chai Wan Footbridge outside Chai Wan MTR Station	
Eastern	12. The streets around Sai Wan Ho Market including Tai On Street and section of Shau Kei Wan Road in front of Tai On Building, the vicinity of Quarry Bay Market including Quarry Bay Footbridge, a section of King's Road between Finnie Street and Hong On Street and outside Jusco area	
	13. Pavement between Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter and Aberdeen Promenade	
	Islands	14. The areas in the vicinity of Cheung Chau Ferry Pier and Praya Street, Cheung Chau
		15. The areas at the junction of Yat Tung Street and Chung Yan Road, Tung Chung, Lantau Island

District	Location
Yau Tsim Mong	16. Nathan Road section between Argyle Street and Dundas Street
	17. Sai Yeung Choi Street South section between Argyle Street and Dundas Street
	18. Vicinity of FEHD Mong Kok Market bounded by Nelson Street, Canton Road, Argyle Street and Tong Mi Road
	19. Fa Yuen Street section between Nullah Road and Dundas Street
	20. Sai Yee Street section between Argyle Street and Soy Street
	21. Portland Street section between Argyle Street and Dundas Street
Sham Shui Po	22. Tung Chau Street (between Yen Chow Street and Nam Cheong Street)
	23. Pei Ho Street (between Un Chau Street and Lai Chi Kok Road)
	24. Kweilin Street (between Apliu Street and Yu Chau Street)
Kowloon City	25. Bulkeley Street (between Gillies Ave South and Dock Street)
Wong Tai Sin	26. Tai Shing Street, Tai Tung Street and its vicinity
	27. Ngau Chi Wan Village and its vicinity
	28. Lung Cheung Road Shatin Pass Road
	29. Lok Fu MTR Station area near Wang Tau Hom East Road and its vicinity
	30. Ching Tak Street and its vicinity
	31. Tai Yau Street and its vicinity in San Po Kong Industrial Area
Kwun Tong	32. Tsun Yip Street/ How Ming Street / Hip Wo Street / Shui Wo Street / Hoi Yuen Road
	33. Footbridges of Telford Plaza linking Kowloon Bay MTR / Ngau Tau Kok Road of Amoy Plaza / Wang Hoi Road
	34. Lam Tin Estate passage way between Tak Tin Street & Ping Tin Street at side of Lam Tin Estate Bus Terminus
	35. On Wah Street / On Tak Road / Jordan Valley Road North / Ngau Tau Kok Road adjacent to Lower Ngau Tau Estate
Kwai Tsing	36. Sheung Ko Tan Street, Chung Mei Village, Tsing Yi
Tuen Mun	37. Vicinity of Sam Shing Estate

	38. Kai Man Path
	39. Mei Lok Lane
Yuen Long	40. Hop Choi Street

District	Location
North	41. Sheung Shui MTR Station & its vicinity (including surrounding footbridges, Choi Yuen Road and San Wan Road)
	42. Fanling MTR Station & its vicinity (including Fanling Station Road and from adjoining footbridge to Pak Wo Road and Yat Ming Road)
Sha Tin	43. Under flyover between Lung Hang Estate & Sun Chui Estate
	44. Near Fun City, Lek Yuen Street
	45. Mei Tin Road

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)101

Question Serial No.

1576

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In 2009-10, the Department will enhance the facilities and management of public markets, inter alia, by continuing improvement works and market promotion. Please advise on:

- (a) the detailed work plan; and
- (b) the manpower and expenditure involved.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

In 2009-10, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will carry out general improvement works in 13 markets at an estimated total cost of \$195 million. The works mainly include upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage and fire services provisions. The improvement works are outsourced through the Architectural Services Department. The planning and monitoring duties are undertaken by existing staff of the concerned departments. The general improvement works of these markets are expected to be completed in one to two years.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to organise promotional activities in public markets, including roving exhibitions, thematic workshops and festive celebration activities. Quarterly newsletters will also be published to provide updated market information and publicize promotional activities. To further promote active use of public markets, we have since February 2009 lowered the upset price of market stalls which have been vacant for six months or more to attract more potential bidders. We will introduce service trades in selected public markets and expand the variety of permitted trades, for example traditional snack shops or bakeries, to enhance the attractiveness of markets.

Planning and coordination of market promotion activities will be undertaken by existing staff of the Department. For 2009-10, the expenditure for market promotions is estimated at \$3 million. For markets where management services have been contracted out, festive promotional activities will be undertaken by contractors at their expense.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)102

Question Serial No.

1928

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In respect of the financial provision for 2008-09, what are the reasons for a reduction of 41.8% in the revised estimate of \$19.6 million as compared with the original estimate of \$33.7 million?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The decrease of \$14.1 million (41.8%) in 2008-09 revised estimate for Programme (2) : Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 original estimate is mainly due to savings in the funds earmarked for controlling zoonotic diseases.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)103

Question Serial No.

1924

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10 that the Branch will continue to develop a Poultry Slaughtering Centre. In this connection, would the Administration please advise on the following:

- (a) What is the progress of the programme? When is the Centre expected to commence operation?
- (b) What is the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

To minimize the risk of avian influenza outbreak, implementation of central slaughtering is an important initiative in Government's policy of segregating live poultry from humans. A substantial number of live poultry traders have ceased business under the Buyout Scheme launched for the live poultry trade in 2008. Following the conclusion of the Scheme, the exact number of traders remaining is now available for finalising the key parameters of the Poultry Slaughtering Centre (PSC), including the scale of the facility.

The Administration is proceeding with the preparatory work on the development of the PSC, including the environmental impact assessment and land-use rezoning where the two statutory approval processes would be conducted in parallel. We would also conduct a study to assess the best mode of operation and ascertain market interests in operating the PSC. We expect that the PSC would come into operation in 2011/12.

The estimated capital expenditure involved is currently being assessed. The work involved in taking forward this initiative will be absorbed by existing manpower of the Food and Health Bureau.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Mrs Stella HUNG</u>
	<u>Permanent Secretary for Food</u>
Post Title	<u>and Health (Food)</u>
Date	<u>16.3.2009</u>

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)104

Question Serial No.

1925

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

As stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, the Administration will continue to promote the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries. Will the Administration inform us:

- a. What are the details of the plan?
- b. What is the estimated expenditure involved?
- c. What measures were in place to promote the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries in 2008-09 and what was the effectiveness of such measures?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- a. In 2009-10, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (the Department) will continue to promote the sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen.

For example, in agriculture, the Department will assist farmers to capture high-value market niches by promoting the development of organic farming and intensive greenhouse production as well as development of brand names and marketing network for local agricultural products emphasizing good quality.

As regards fisheries, the Department will help fish farmers to improve the quality and competitiveness of their products through developing organic fish farming and fish fry production techniques and identifying suitable new fish species for culture.

- b. The Department has earmarked a provision of \$52.2 million in 2009-10 for the promotion of sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries.
- c. As regards agriculture, in 2008-09, the Department conducted adaptive and technical studies to (a) improve crop growing methods, (b) prevent diseases and pests, (c) select suitable crop varieties for local production, and (d) introduce environmentally controlled greenhouse technology to local farmers to raise their productivity and quality of production. All the above production technology and practices have been regularly extended to local farmers through seminars, workshops and on-farm visits under the Voluntary Registration Scheme, Accredited Vegetable Farm Scheme and Organic Farming Support Service. As at 31 December 2008, over 99% or 1993 farmers have joined the Voluntary Registration

Scheme. Out of this total, 215 have joined the Accredited Vegetable Farm Scheme and 123 have joined the Organic Farming Support Service.

As regards fisheries, in 2008-09, the Department took action to conserve local fisheries resources through enforcement against destructive fishing practices, deployment of artificial reefs and implementation of relevant educational and publicity activities. The Department encouraged fishermen to switch to sustainable fisheries operations through the provision of technical support, training and credit facilities. Moreover, the Department introduced techniques for culture of new fish species and fish fry production, extended good husbandry practices, as well as continued to promote the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme. The majority of local fish farmers have now adopted good husbandry practices and some 80 fish farmers have joined the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme. In addition, a total of six fish farmers have started culturing the newly introduced species, Jade Perch, and some are venturing into setting up small-scale fish hatcheries.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 18 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)105

Question Serial No.

1926

Head: 139 – Government
Secretariat: Food and
Health Bureau (Food
Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, it is stated that the Administration will draw up legislation to strengthen control over pesticide residues in food. Please advise us of :

- a. the details of the plan;
- b. the implementation timetable and the implementation date of the legislation at the earliest; and
- c. the estimated expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- a. The Administration plans to introduce a new piece of regulation on the control of pesticide residues in food. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), under the policy directive of the Food and Health Bureau (FHB), conducted a consultation exercise on the proposed regulatory framework for pesticide residues in food in 2007-08. FEHD is now consolidating the opinions received during the public consultation, refining the proposed regulatory framework, and setting up nearly 10,000 statutory residue limits for different kinds of food connected with more than 400 pesticides in the initial stage.
- b. The timetable for the next stages of work will be drawn up after the proposed regulatory framework has been refined.
- c. The legislative work is undertaken by existing staff and involves no additional expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Stella HUNG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Food and
Health (Food)

Date _____ 16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)106

Question Serial No.

1927

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the total financial provision, the Estimate for 2009-10 is \$66.7 million, which is higher than the Revised Estimate of \$19.6 million for 2008-09 by 240.3%, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The increase of \$47.1 million (240.3%) in 2009-10 estimate for Programme (2): Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 revised estimate is mainly attributable to the following-

	<u>\$ million</u>
(a) Reserve for conducting various surveys and studies on nutrition labeling and enhancing publicity on food safety matters	8.0
(b) Provision for promoting the accreditation of private laboratories for developing Hong Kong into a food testing hub and outsourcing of food tests	15.0
(c) Provision for meeting unexpected expenditure like controlling zoonotic diseases and coping with food incidents	19.0
(d) Provisions for the net increase of two posts and increases in other operating expenses	5.1
Total:	47.1

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)107

Question Serial No.

1577

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The Estimate for 2009-10 exceeds the Revised Estimate for 2008-09 by a significant amount of 240.3%. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply:

The increase of \$47.1 million (240.3%) in 2009-10 estimate for Programme (2): Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety, as compared with the 2008-09 revised estimate is mainly attributable to the following-

	<u>\$ million</u>
(a) Reserve for conducting various surveys and studies on nutrition labeling and enhancing publicity on food safety matters	8.0
(b) Provision for promoting the accreditation of private laboratories for developing Hong Kong into a food testing hub and outsourcing of food tests	15.0
(c) Provision for meeting unexpected expenditure like controlling zoonotic diseases and coping with food incidents	19.0
(d) Provisions for the net increase of two posts and increases in other operating expenses	5.1
Total:	47.1

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 16.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)108

Question Serial No.

1916

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the outsourcing of the routine food testing work, how many qualified laboratories have undertaken the testing work of the food concerned in the previous year?

As for the additional resources released from this outsourcing exercise to take up test method development, what are the details of the test method and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

In 2008-09, Government Laboratory outsourced 22 000 routine food tests to two local private laboratories that fulfill our requirements.

In 2009-10, the Government Laboratory plans to outsource about 77 000 routine food tests to the private laboratories, which is equivalent to about 50% of the total routine food tests in the fiscal year. The resources thus released will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation and assist in contract management.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)109

Question Serial No.

1917

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In 2009, the indicator for urgent samples relating to food incidents is shown as "N.A." due to wide fluctuation of testing requirement? What are the causes of such fluctuation? Will the Administration revise the criteria for setting this indicator? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

From 2009 onwards, the previous targets of "samples relating to food poisoning within one working day" and "food samples for regulatory compliance purposes within target reporting time averaging 19 working days" are regrouped into two new targets. The new targets are "urgent samples relating to food incidents within two working days" and "other food samples within reporting time averaging 19 working days". The re-grouping of performance targets from 2009 onwards aims at providing a clearer and more precise description and indication of the reporting time for processing food samples involving different levels of urgency and complexity.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)110

Question Serial No.

1716

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In regard to the target of conducting inspections of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong (no. of farms), the department's target is 35. However, the actual number of inspected farms in 2008 was 50; the department again estimates to conduct 50 inspections of these farms in 2009. Why is there a significant increase in the number of inspections? Will the department deploy additional provision and staff members for the inspections? If so, please provide the details.

Asked by : Hon. Abraham SHEK

Reply :

In 2008, the Department enhanced the number of farm inspections in the Mainland, with the provision of six more Field Officers. More inspections to farms in the Mainland were carried out in 2008 to enhance food safety, with a focus on control at source. Maintaining the same number of farm inspections in 2009 is considered appropriate. We will suitably enhance the number of farm inspections through re-deployment when the situation so warrants.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)111

Question Serial No.

1929

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under this programme, the estimated number of inspections to food premises to be conducted in 2009 is 220 000, representing a decrease of 12 245 over the actual number in 2008. Please advise on the reasons for the decrease and the effect on food safety surveillance.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The decrease in the estimated number of inspections to food premises in 2009 is due to an estimated 5% decrease in the number of such premises. The inspection frequency however remains unchanged and hygiene control on food premises will not be compromised.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)112

Question Serial No.

2282

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The revised estimate for 2008-09 is lower than the original estimate for 2008-09 by 11.1%. Please give an explanation for the reduction.

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The decrease of \$2.2 million (11.1%) in 2008-09 revised estimate for Programme (3): Environmental Hygiene, as compared with the 2008-09 original estimate is mainly due to savings in operating expenditure, conducting of consultancy studies and carrying out publicity programmes.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)113

Question Serial No.

2283

Head: 139 Government Subhead (No. & title):
Secretariat: Food and
Health Bureau (Food
Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

On "continue to develop a Poultry Slaughtering Centre", how is the current progress? Has any provision been earmarked for this plan this year? If yes, how much is the provision? Are those investors who have expressed their intent to develop such a centre earlier are still interested now? Or is it necessary to solicit other investors?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

To minimize the risk of avian influenza outbreak, implementation of central slaughtering is an important initiative in Government's policy of segregating live poultry from humans. A substantial number of live poultry traders have ceased business under the Buyout Scheme launched for the live poultry trade in 2008. Following the conclusion of the Scheme, the exact number of traders remaining is now available for finalising the key parameters of the Poultry Slaughtering Centre (PSC), including the scale of the facility.

The Administration is proceeding with the preparatory work on the development of the PSC, including the environmental impact assessment and land-use rezoning where the two statutory approval processes would be conducted in parallel. We would also conduct a study to assess the best mode of operation and ascertain market interests in operating the PSC. We expect that the PSC would come into operation in 2011/12.

The estimated capital expenditure involved is currently being assessed. The work in taking forward this initiative will be absorbed by existing manpower of the Food and Health Bureau.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs Stella HUNG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)
Date	16.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB (FE) 114

Question Serial
No.

2284

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Food and Health Bureau (Food Branch) Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

On “implement measures to improve the viability of public markets”, please specify the dedicated provision and the measures concerned.

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The Food and Health Bureau is responsible for formulating policies on public markets and overseeing the work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) in implementing measures to improve the viability of public markets. In 2009-10, FEHD will take forward the following measures to improve the viability of public markets :

- (i) conduct general improvement works in 13 markets, at an estimated total cost of about \$195 million. Such improvement works include mainly upgrading of fire services installation, replacement of wall/floor tiles, upgrading of drainage, ventilation system and general lighting, refurbishment of ceiling and toilets, and

provision of new signages. The general improvement works of these markets are expected to be completed in one to two years.

- (ii) conduct utilization and patron opinion surveys on public markets by batches in 2009-10 at an estimated expenditure of \$8 million with a view to improving how public markets serve the needs of the public. The surveys will commence in March 2009, and we will present the findings of the survey to the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene in mid-2009;
- (iii) introduce service trades (e.g. beauty care/massage, real estate services, Chinese medicine and bone-setting) in selected public markets; and expanding the variety of permitted trades, for example traditional snack shops or bakeries with a view to further enhancing the vibrancy of public markets;
- (iv) organise workshops / seminars in the second half of 2009 inviting District Councils, Area Committees and other stakeholders to discuss measures to improve public market operation and explore design concepts of new public markets; and
- (v) organise promotional activities in public markets at an estimated expenditure of \$3 million. Such promotional activities include roving exhibitions, thematic workshops and festive celebration activities. Quarterly newsletters will also be published to provide updated market information and publicize promotional activities.

At the bureau level, we will make use of existing resources to monitor the progress of these measures and provide the necessary policy steer.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____
Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for
Food and Health (Food)

Date _____
13.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB (FE) 115

Question Serial
No.

2297

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Food and Health Bureau (Food Branch)
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10", regarding the follow-up on the recommendations of the review on hawker licensing policy, please provide information about the following:

- a. the timetable of the follow-up actions and the implementation time regarding the recommendations;
- b. the estimated expenditure to be involved; and
- c. in view of the economic downturn due to the financial turmoil, whether the Administration will adjust the findings of the review and issue more hawker licences, in order to create more employment opportunities for the public to tide over the financial difficulty.

Asked by: Hon. Wong Kwok-hing

Reply:

- (a) The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) briefed the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene of the Legislative Council (LegCo Panel) on findings of the hawker licensing review on 10 February 2009 and attended a subsequent LegCo Panel meeting on 10 March 2009 to meet with and listen to the views of deputations from the hawking trade and other

stakeholders. The Panel will further discuss this item at the next Panel meeting to be held on 14 April 2009. Upon reaching a consensus with the LegCo Panel on the way forward and the licensing proposals, FEHD will proceed to take appropriate follow-up actions.

- (b) At the bureau level, the implementation of the review recommendations will be absorbed through existing resources.
- (c) Under the current proposal put forward by the Administration, we intend to open up some 1,300 vacant hawker fixed pitches and 30 itinerant hawker (frozen confectionery) licences for application by eligible persons. As the review is still being considered by the LegCo Panel, we welcome suggestions from Members and stakeholders.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for
Food and Health (Food)

Date _____ 13.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)116

Question Serial No.

1132

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Provision for 2009-10 will be lowered by \$179.1 million due to decrease in non-recurrent expenditure for the Buyout Scheme for the live poultry trade, partly offset by an increase in capital expenditure.

- a. What are the total savings in non-recurrent expenditure arising from the Buyout Scheme for the live poultry trade? Which areas of expenditure are mainly involved?
- b. As quite a number of live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters have closed their business, will the resources and manpower earmarked by relevant departments in this aspect be reduced in 2009-10? If yes, what is the reduction involved? If no, please state the reasons.
- c. Is there a need for the Department to reorganise its work in the light of the work reduction and change?
- d. The decrease in non-recurrent expenditure will be offset by an increase in capital expenditure. What areas of capital expenditure will be increased?
- e. What is the post to be created in 2009-10? Please state its responsibilities.

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

- a. The non-recurrent expenditure for the Buyout Scheme refers to the ex-gratia payment (EGP) (including one-off grants for affected workers) payable to participants of the Buyout Scheme. As most of the EGP will have been settled by end of the financial year 2008-09, the provision for the Buyout Scheme will decrease by \$191 million in 2009-10 as compared to that of the previous year.
- b. Although a number of poultry farmers, wholesalers and transporters have ceased business under the Buyout Scheme, the decrease in workload as a result has been marginal. Much of the marginal saving in manpower will be used to step up farm inspections and patrol against backyard poultry, handle increased amount of routine sample collection and enforce tightened biosecurity requirements in view of the continued threat of avian influenza. Moreover, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department still has to keep de-licensed farms under surveillance to prevent illegal keeping of poultry. The remaining saving in manpower will be deployed to strengthen the control of pig farms (43 farms in total) in connection with the proposed introduction of a Code of Practice as part of the licence conditions by late 2009 tentatively.
- c. No reorganisation of the Department is required as a result.

- d. The increase in capital expenditure is mainly due to the acquisition of a biosafety level 3 modular laboratory.
- e. One Agricultural Officer post will be created in 2009-10 to enhance support for the management of law and order and hygiene in the four Government wholesale food markets.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)117

Question Serial No.

1133

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In connection with the item "vegetables" under "Agriculture", the actual production in 2008 was 16 400 tonnes. However, the quantity marketed through the Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) markets was 176 796 tonnes, which had not yet included the quantity marketed through the Government's wholesale fresh food markets. Please provide information for the following:

- a. Are all vegetables produced by local farms marketed through the VMO markets?
- b. What is the total quantity of vegetables consumed by the Hong Kong people in 2008, according to government statistics? What is the ratio regarding production/import or marketing through the above 3 channels? What is the estimated total quantity in 2009 and the ratio regarding production/import or marketing through the above 3 channels?
- c. What is the existing number of VMO markets? What were the revenue from and the expenditure on operating and managing these markets last year?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

- a. Local farmers can market their vegetables through any of the established wholesale markets or through direct sale. Of the 16 400 tonnes of local vegetables produced in 2008, 3 400 tonnes were marketed through the VMO market.
- b. In 2008, Hong Kong people consumed some 655 000 tonnes of fresh vegetables, of which some 2.5% was locally produced and the rest (97.5%) imported. Of the total quantity of vegetables consumed, 27% was marketed through the VMO market. It is envisaged that these percentage shares would remain more or less the same in 2009.

- c. Currently one vegetable wholesale market is managed by VMO. For the financial year ended 31 March 2008, the trading income from and the expenditure on operating and managing the market was \$69 million and \$50 million respectively. Surplus of VMO is ploughed back for the improvement of local agriculture through funding schemes, scholarships and low-interest loan programmes.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 18 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)118

Question Serial No.

1134

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In connection with the item "Fisheries", the production by capture in 2008 was 158 000 tonnes, while the quantity marketed through the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) was 51 200 tonnes. Please provide information for the following:

- a. The production by capture in 2008 was 4 000 tonnes more than that in 2007. However, according to the fishermen, the quantity of marine catches was decreasing year after year, as well as rather unstable. How was the data in the Estimates arrived at?
- b. What are the channels for marketing the catches? Does the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department provide any facilities or services during the marketing process? What is the revenue from providing such facilities or services?
- c. What is the existing number of FMO markets? What are the types of fish marketed? What is the income from market operations of the FMO? What is the expenditure on the provision of the ancillary services?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

- a. Capture fisheries production statistics are collected on a quarterly basis by interviewing around 15% of fishing vessel operators from different sectors at different fishing ports around Hong Kong. While the annual statistics show an overall declining trend in capture fisheries production over the past decade, the changes in annual production may vary from year to year. Such phenomenon is considered normal.
- b. Hong Kong fishermen usually sell their catches in Hong Kong and the Mainland. For those catches sold locally, the Government provides wholesale marketing facilities and services through the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO), a statutory self-financing organization established by the authority of the Marine Fish (Marketing) Ordinance, Cap 291. The FMO charges fishermen commission for the facilities and services provided and the income so generated by the FMO in 2007-08 was \$24 million.

- c. The FMO currently operates seven wholesale fish markets. The types of fishery produce marketed through the FMO markets are mainly fresh marine fish and live seafood. For the financial year ended 31 March 2008, the trading income and expenditure of the FMO arising from the operation of these markets were \$45 million and \$40 million, respectively. FMO is financially autonomous and hence its revenue and expenditure are separate from those of the Government.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 18 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)119

Question Serial No.

1135

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In connection with fresh food wholesale markets, please provide information for the following questions:

- a. It is estimated that the occupancy rate of rental market stalls will decrease in 2009. What are the reasons and what types of market stalls are involved?
- b. Are there any promotion programmes for renting out the remaining stalls?
- c. The requests for assistance handled in 2008 were 19 600, representing a substantial increase of 4 600 from that of 2007. Please state the reasons. What aspects did these requests mainly involve? Has the Department provided any appropriate assistance and how many cases have been solved successfully?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

- a. The expected decrease in the occupancy rate of wholesale market stalls in 2009 is largely due to the fact that a number of tenants in the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market have surrendered their tenancies after joining the Buyout Scheme for the live poultry trade.
- b. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will continue to promote the remaining stalls through trade associations, advertisements in major local newspapers and the homepage of the Department. However, the vacant stalls in the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market will not be rented out in view of the implementation of the Buyout Scheme for the live poultry trade.
- c. In July 2008, the Government announced that the rent of the Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market, the Western Wholesale Food Market and the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market would be waived for the months of October 2008 and October 2009. During the year, tenants at the three markets also needed to renew their tenancy agreements. We therefore received a larger number of enquiries from market tenants on rent related matters compared to 2007. All these requests have been resolved.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MISS CHEUNG SIU HING

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 16 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)120

Question Serial No.

2304

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead:

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In connection with assisting farmers to capture high-value-market niches by providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, please provide information on the following:

- a. Apart from providing technical advice, will the Administration put in resources in other areas, such as marketing, wholesaling and retailing so as to create more job opportunities and promote local agricultural development? If yes, please give the details. If not, please state the reasons.
- b. Will the Administration provide financial assistance or loans to farmers for development in these areas? If yes, what is the estimated expenditure involved? Please provide the details. If not, please state the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- a. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) organizes promotional trade activities and exhibitions to promote local produce. It also works closely with the Vegetable Marketing Organization to help promote local produce to high-end markets for local farmers. Moreover, it organizes technical seminars and workshops on marketing strategies and planning for farmers, and assists them to explore direct sale channels such as "Pick Your Own" or Weekend Farmers Market.
- b. Low interest loans under the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund, the J.E. Joseph Trust Fund and the Vegetable Marketing Organization Loan Fund administered by the AFCD are made available to local farmers for developing organic cultivation and greenhouse production. A total sum of \$31.5 million is available at present.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MISS CHEUNG SIU HING _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 18 March 2009 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)121

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

2018

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

What is the financial provision earmarked for taking food samples for testing in 2009-10? How is it compared to the provision in the previous year (i.e. 2008-09)? Why does the estimated number of samples to be taken decrease over the previous year (i.e. 2008-09)?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The expenditure on food surveillance at import, wholesale and retail levels is estimated at \$53.8 million for 2009-10, which shows an increase of \$4 million compared with 2008-09.

The number of food samples to be tested under the food surveillance programme in 2008 had been planned to be 65 000. Due to the melamine incident in late 2008, more tests were conducted and a total of 66 726 samples were tested in the event. The estimate of 65 000 samples for 2009 is appropriate for an average year.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)122

Question Serial No.

2019

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

In 2009-10, the number of blood samples to be taken from poultry will decrease substantially by 40%. In this connection, by how much will the financial provision be reduced? What are the specific plans for prevention of avian influenza in 2009-10?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The estimated number of blood samples for 2009 is contingent on the estimated number of live poultry to be supplied from the Mainland. The usual daily import limit on live chickens came down from 20 000 in January 2008 to the current 7 000 chickens. This in turn reduces the number of blood samples that needs to be taken. Notwithstanding such reduction, the provision for the overall prevention of avian influenza in 2009-10 remains the same given the persistent threat of avian influenza and the need for the Administration to remain vigilant against the risks posed by the virus.

Regarding the control of imported live poultry, the measures taken by the Department to prevent the outbreak of avian influenza in Hong Kong include: poultry farm inspections and liaison with the Mainland authorities to ensure that requirements on animal health, quarantine and farm conditions are complied with; inspection of every consignment of imported poultry, including verification of Animal Health Certificates; collecting blood samples and cloacal swabs for laboratory testing of avian influenza H5. Besides, the Department has also

implemented various measures at the retail outlets. These include enforcing no overnight stocking of live poultry at retail outlets; maintaining comprehensive surveillance by engaging a local university to take environmental swabs for analysis and conducting regular checks on retail outlets to ensure compliance with the relevant licensing conditions or tenancy requirements.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)123

Question Serial No.

2020

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

What is the establishment of staff responsible for inspecting imported vegetables at Man Kam To? In this connection, what is the financial provision earmarked for 2009-10? How is it compared to the provision in the previous year (i.e. 2008-09)?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

In 2009-10, the Man Kam To Food Control Office has an establishment of 42 posts, including health inspectors and supporting staff responsible for inspecting imported fresh food.

The estimated expenditure for import control for food is \$88.8 million in 2009-10, representing a rise of \$4.5 million (5.3%) from the revised estimate of 2008-09. The increase in expenditure is to enhance the staffing support on import control.

The resources provided for inspection of imported vegetables cannot be separately identified.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)124

Question Serial No.

2021

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The number of vehicles carrying vegetables to be inspected at Man Kam To will decrease in 2009-10. In this connection, what is the estimated number of samples to be taken for testing? How is it compared to the number in the previous year (i.e. 2008-09)? What are the plans in 2009-10 to ensure vegetables imported to Hong Kong are safe for consumption?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The planned number of vegetable vehicles to be inspected at Man Kam To Food Control Office is the same in 2008-09 and 2009-10 (i.e. 28 000 vehicles). To address public concern about possible food smuggling in late 2008, more inspections were conducted and the total number of inspections was therefore increased to 28 467. The estimate of 28 000 vegetable vehicles to be inspected in 2009 is appropriate for an average year.

The Centre for Food Safety and the Customs and Excise Department will as appropriate step up inspections on inbound food-carrying vehicles at the border checkpoints, including vegetables trucks at Man Kam To Control Point, to ensure food safety.

For 2009, the estimated number of vegetable samples to be taken at the Man Kam To Food Control Office for analysis of pesticide residues is 13 000, which is about the same as 2008.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)125

Question Serial No.

2022

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

It is estimated that the number of prosecutions against licensed food premises will further decrease in 2009-10. What are the reasons for the decrease? Why is it estimated that the number of inspections to food premises will decrease by 5.3%?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The estimated decrease in the number of inspections to and prosecutions against food premises in 2009 is due to an estimated 5% decrease in the number of such premises. The inspection frequency however remains unchanged and hygiene control on food premises will not be compromised.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)126

Question Serial No.

2023

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What is the Department's estimated expenditure on cleansing services for 2009-10? What is the proportion of the services to be contracted out? What is the number of workers to be employed by the cleansing contractors in 2009-10? How is it compared to that in 2008-09?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

In 2009-10, the Department's estimated expenditure on public cleansing services is \$1,756 million. In terms of manpower, about 67% of street cleansing services are being provided by contractors. It is estimated that 6 242 workers will be employed by contractors in 2009-10 for providing public cleansing services, compared to 5 694 in 2008-09.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)127

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

2024

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Please advise on the specific plans by the Department to take forward the provision of more crematoria and columbaria facilities during 2009-10.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

With the endorsement of the Finance Committee on 13 February 2009, works for the reprovisioning of the Wo Hop Shek Crematorium will commence in mid-2009 for constructing six new cremators and other ancillary facilities to replace the existing crematorium. We are also planning to redevelop the Cape Collinson Crematorium to provide for ten new cremators. The details and the expenditure of the Cape Collinson Crematorium reprovisioning project are being worked out.

In addition, we are planning for new columbarium facilities at the Wo Hop Shek Cemetery providing for about 37 000 niches and a Garden of Remembrance for completion by around 2012. We will consult the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the project when details and the estimated expenditure have been worked out. Separately, we are exploring the feasibility of constructing more Gardens of Remembrance at existing public cemeteries.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)128

Question Serial No.

2186

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational expenses

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

With regard to the operation of Hawker Control Teams (HCT) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, please advise:

- a. on the number of permanent posts in the HCT out of the 11 140 permanent posts under the current establishment of the Department, and the number of contract staff, if any;
- b. on the annual expenditure of the HCT over the past 5 years (i.e. from 2004-05 to 2008-09);
- c. if the operational target to be accomplished by the HCT is based on the number of arrests; and
- d. if the Department will review the role and functions of the HCT, and whether the operational targets of the HCT will be revised to include "facilitating the effective operation of licensed hawkers" in addition to conducting "raids" and making "arrests".

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows -

- (a) As at 1.2.2009, the Hawker Control Teams (HCT) have an establishment of 2 042 Hawker Control Officer Grade staff and 360 Workman I. There is no contract staff in the HCT.

- (b) The annual expenditure on hawker control, management and licensing work in the past five years are as follows:
- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 2004-05 Actual | \$789.9 million |
| 2005-06 Actual | \$737.8 million |
| 2006-07 Actual | \$717.7 million |
| 2007-08 Actual | \$738.3 million |
| 2008-09 Revised Estimate | \$773.7 million |
- (c) The number of arrests made is not an operational target for HCT staff.
- (d) In the programme area of Hawker Control, our objectives are to regulate licensed hawking activities to maintain environmental hygiene and ensure main thoroughfares are free from obstruction; and to take enforcement action against unlicensed hawking. These functions arise from our role as the licensing authority for hawkers and the vesting of the statutory enforcement powers with the Department. Efforts to ensure the orderly conduct of hawking activities also help facilitate the operation of licensed hawkers.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Revised

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)129

Question Serial No.

2285

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The actual number of raids conducted by Hawker Control Teams in 2008 was 115 271. Please advise on the details of the operations, the number of summonses issued and prosecutions initiated, as well as the amount of fines imposed and the goods forfeited. In terms of the number of raids, please list the top 5 districts and their respective figures.

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The Hawker Control Teams (HCT) conduct operations to control illegal hawking activities, maintain the operation of hawker permitted areas in an orderly manner, respond to complaints regarding illegal hawking and shop extensions and help address street management problems by taking part in joint operations with other government departments. Arising from HCT operations undertaken in 2008, 34 339 prosecutions by way of summons and arrest actions were taken out. The level of fine imposed by the court ranged from \$30 to \$2,000. Goods and hawking paraphernalia were forfeited in 10 000 arrest cases.

The five districts with the highest number of HCT operations are Yuen Long (11 853), Tuen Mun (9 959), Tai Po (9 630), North (8 470) and Kwai Tsing (7 794).

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

23.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)130

Question Serial No.

2286

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The estimated number of fixed pitch hawkers for 2009 is 7 000, representing an increase of 411 over the actual number in 2008. What are the reasons for the increase? In which districts or bazaars are most of these fixed pitches located?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

Arising from the review of hawker licensing policy, we have recommended the allocation of vacant fixed pitches to existing licensees of adjacent pitches or to new licensees, hence the anticipated increase in the total number of fixed pitch hawkers.

Most of the vacant pitches available for allocation in connection with the new issue of fixed pitch hawker licences are located in Yau Tsim Mong and Sham Shui Po Districts.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)131

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

2289

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The estimated provision for 2009-10 is 4.9% higher than the revised estimate for 2008-09. Please give the reasons for the increase. Will the full amount of additional provision be used for creating 12 posts? What are the rank and duties of these new posts?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The increase in financial provision under this Programme is mainly attributed to creation of posts and increase in departmental expenses relating to enhancement of food safety regulatory functions and pest control services.

The posts to be created are in the grades of Health Inspector, Scientific Officer (Medical), Pest Control Officer, Pest Control Assistant, Field Assistant, Laboratory Attendant and administration support grades. Their main duties are to perform food safety regulatory work and provide pest control services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)132

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

2300

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

With regard to the promotion of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) approach to the trade, please advise on:

- a. the details of the promotion effort and the benefits of promoting HACCP;
- b. the estimated expenditure involved; and
- c. how the Department will assess the effectiveness of the promotion effort.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

A food safety plan based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) concepts is internationally acknowledged as an effective tool for enhancing food safety and reducing the risk of food poisoning. In 2009, the Department will organise 33 seminars to promote HACCP and the HACCP-based Food Safety Plan. During the seminars, practice guidelines, bulletins and leaflets will be distributed to the food trade and the general public. The activities will be evaluated using questionnaire surveys to assess any change in knowledge, attitude and practice of the participants. Promotion of HACCP is part and parcel of the overall education and promotion programmes on food safety. There is no separate breakdown on its expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

W H CHEUK

Post Title _____

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____

17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)133

Question Serial No.

2301

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Regarding the indicator for “blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies”, the number of samples will decrease from 68 894 in 2008 (Actual) to 41 000 in 2009 (Estimate). What are the reasons for the decrease?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The estimated number of blood samples for 2009 is contingent on the estimated number of live poultry to be supplied from the Mainland. The usual daily import limit on live chickens came down from 20 000 in January 2008 to the current 7 000 chickens. This in turn reduces the number of blood samples that needs to be taken.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **W H CHEUK** _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)134

Question Serial No.

2302

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, the Department will identify markets with consistently high vacancy rate and deficits for closure. Please advise:

- a. on the resiting arrangements for existing tenants of markets identified for closure; and
- b. whether the Department will, in view of the economic downturn brought about by the financial tsunami, consider charging extremely low rents to attract new tenants to start business in these markets as a means to help members of the public to find a way out in times of adversity.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) For market closure, tenants affected may choose to operate in another vacant stall in other markets at concessionary rent or, depending on circumstances, ex-gratia payment may be offered. In response to requests from some affected tenants for relocation to on-street vacant hawker pitches, we will take forward the proposal in consultation with the District Council concerned.

- (b) We have just put up long-standing vacant stalls in all wet markets for open auction at reduced upset auction prices. Upset auction prices are fixed at 80 % of the open market rent if the stalls have been vacant for six months, and at 60 % if the vacancy period is eight months or more.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)135

Question Serial No.

2303

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (4) Public Education and Community Involvement

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, the Department will strengthen health promotional activities on nutrition labelling. In this connection, please advise on:

- a. the details of the activities;
- b. the estimated expenditure involved;
- c. how the Department will assess the effectiveness of the activities; and
- d. apart from nutrition labelling, how the Department will regulate genetically modified food. Has the Department earmarked financial provision for implementing mandatory genetically modified food labelling? If yes, please provide details. If not, please give the reasons.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The information sought in (a) to (c) above is provided as follows -

The Department will strengthen health promotion on nutrition labelling with an array of publicity and education activities to reach a wider audience and achieve a bigger impact. In addition to outreaching programmes targeting at schools, seminars for the general public, TV and Radio Announcements in the Public Interest, other major activities include the annual function "Food Safety Day 2009" featuring road show, game booths, exhibitions and radio broadcasting, radio/TV programmes, advertising campaign at MTR stations and bus shelters etc. A series of train-the-trainer workshops for stakeholders in the medical and education sectors will be conducted to enlist community support in promoting nutrition labelling. The activities will be evaluated using a standard structure, process and outcome framework. Surveys will be conducted to assess any change in public knowledge, attitude and practice. The promotion work is undertaken by existing staff and the expenditure cannot be separately identified.

As regards (d), as stipulated in the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Chapter 132), all food on sale must be wholesome, unadulterated and fit for human consumption. This principle also applies to genetically modified (GM) food. In response to rising consumer demand for more product information, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has issued a set of “Guidelines on Voluntary Labelling of GM Food” in July 2006. The Guidelines serve to provide references for the trade to make truthful and informative GM labels in a consumer-friendly manner.

The lack of international standard is an important reason for not introducing a local mandatory labelling scheme for GM food. No provision is hence allocated for implementing such a scheme.

Signature

Name in block letters

W H CHEUK

Post Title

Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)136

Question Serial No.

2471

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The quality of public cleansing services is a matter of major public concern. Under Programme (2), both the total expenditure and manpower for 2009-10 will be reduced. It is worrying that there is a decrease in expenditure, although the decrease is due to the completion of the ex-gratia payment made last year. Please advise:

- (a) on the expenditure on cleansing services for 2009-10, the percentage it accounts for in the expenses under Programme (2) and the actual amount of change in expenditure as compared with that in 2008-09;
- (b) on the number of Workman II (WM II) engaged in cleansing services, the change in the number of WM II since 2004 and the estimated change in the number of WM II over the next 4 years (i.e. from 2010 to 2014) based on the medium range forecast; and
- (c) whether there will be any change in the ratio of outsourced workers employed by service contractors to in-house WM II in 2009 and over the next 4 years (i.e. from 2010 to 2014) based on the medium range forecast as the figures of the Department indicated that the ratio in 2008 was 65:35. If yes, what is the change?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Kwok-hung

Reply :

In 2009-10, the estimated expenditure on street cleansing and public toilets is about 60% of the total expenditure under this programme, representing an increase of about \$167 million against that of 2008-09.

It is estimated that as at 1 April 2009 the number of Workman II (WM II) on cleansing duties would be 2 341 as compared with 2 984 as at 1 April 2004. The deployment and need for WM II in the department is being actively reviewed and its requirement in the next four years will be considered having regard to the results of the review.

The existing mode of service delivery by engaging both departmental WM II and employees of service contractors has been working effectively. There is no rigid target ratio for contracting out and the department will keep the existing mode of service delivery under constant review.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)137

Question Serial No.

1140

Head: 48 Government Laboratory Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

The Government Laboratory plans to outsource some of the routine food testing work to the commercial sector in 2009-10. In this regard, please provide the details of the outsourcing plan and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon. LAM Tai-fai

Reply:

In 2009-2010, the Government Laboratory plans to outsource about 77 000 routine food tests to the private laboratories, which is equivalent to about 50% of the total routine food tests in the fiscal year. Estimated expenditure of the outsourcing contracts is about \$9 million. The resources thus released will be deployed to develop new testing methods to facilitate the enforcement of relevant food legislation, conduct testing work involving litigation and assist in contract management.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 17.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)138

Head: 703 – Buildings

Subhead : 3006NT, 3007NT, 3008NT,
3009NT, 3010NT, 3011NT &
3012NT

Question Serial No.

2470

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question : Regarding the conversion of aqua privies into flushing toilets, do the six phases of works include the public toilet near Hau Wong Temple in Tung Chung on the Lantau Island? Is there currently any rural public toilet built on private land? If yes, will the Administration carry out improvement works to such public toilets? If improvement works will be carried out, what is the timetable?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : The Aqua Privy (AP) at Hau Wong Temple in Tung Chung was included in the Conversion of Aqua Privies into Flushing Toilet, Phase 3 programme (3009NT). Conversion has been withheld due to its encroachment onto private land.

Two other toilets, one at Ping Shan Hang Tau Chuen (under Phase 2A programme, 3007NT) and one at Ho Sheung Heung Old Village Site I (under Phase 2B programme, 3008NT) are also found to have encroached onto private land.

We are looking into the feasibility of reprovisioning by flushing toilets in nearby areas.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

C H YUE

Director of Architectural Services

17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)139

Question Serial No.

2625

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

What items are included in other operating expenses for the work of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety? Please give a breakdown of the revised estimate for 2008-09 and the estimate for 2009-10 under this Programme.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

In the 2008-09 revised estimate, we have reserved funding for conducting a Business Impact Assessment study on the proposed Food Safety Bill (\$1.3 million). In the 2009-10 estimate, we have reserved funding for conducting various surveys and studies on nutrition labeling and enhancing publicity on food safety matters (\$8 million); for promoting the accreditation of private laboratories for developing Hong Kong into a food testing hub and outsourcing of food tests (\$15 million); and for meeting unexpected expenditure like controlling zoonotic diseases and coping with food incidents (\$19 million).

Signature _____

Name in block letters Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date 18.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)140

Question Serial No.

2877

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Food and Health Bureau
(Food Branch)

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

As regards this Programme, please advise on:

- (c) the respective provisions for the Secretary for Food and Health, the Under Secretary and the Political Assistant in the 2008-09 revised estimates and the 2009-10 estimates; and
- (b) the specific duties and the respective achievements of the Under Secretary and the Political Assistant in 2008-09. How will the Administration assess if the principle of value for money has been given effect in the creation of the relevant posts?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

- (a) The provisions earmarked for the salary provision for the Secretary, the Under Secretary and the Political Assistant in the 2008-09 Revised Estimates and the 2009-10 Estimates under Head 139 are as follows :

	2008-09 FY Revised Estimates (\$million)	2009-10 FY Estimates (\$million)
Secretary for Food and Health	3.58	3.58
Under Secretary for Food and Health	1.34	2.50
Political Assistant to Secretary for Food and Health	1.09	1.61

- (b) Under Secretary for Food and Health is responsible principally for assisting the Secretary in undertaking the full range of political work, including the handling of LegCo business, and deputising for the Secretary during the latter's temporary absence. For instance, with effect from the 2008-09 legislation session, Secretary for Food and Health or Under Secretary for Food and Health would normally attend regular meetings of the LegCo panel on Health Services and panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene. These are important forums for the Government to explain its policies and to secure support for its initiatives. As part of his role in reaching out to the community, the Under Secretary for Food and Health chaired a number of district forums on the 2008-09 Policy Address.

The Political Assistant to Secretary for Food and Health is responsible principally for providing political support and input to the Secretary and the Under Secretary, and conducting the necessary political liaison at the instruction of the Secretary and the Under Secretary, including the liaison with the media and various stakeholders. Upon assuming office, the Political Assistant to Secretary for Food and Health has provided advice from the political perspective on, for instance, the need for lobbying political parties / groups and the handling of invitations and correspondence from political parties / groups. He has also monitored views from interest groups and the general public on policy issues concerned and assessed the political implications

The appointment of Under Secretary for Food and Health and Political Assistant to Secretary for Food and Health has strengthened the support to the Secretary in undertaking political work, communicating with the Legislative Council (LegCo) and other stakeholders, such as District Councils, political parties/ groups, non-government organisations, district personalities as well as business, professional and other bodies, and explaining Government policies to the media and the public at large.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Stella HUNG

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Food
and Health (Food)

Date _____ 16.3.2009

- (c) The Administration consulted the former Wong Tai Sin District Board in November 1995 on the proposed columbarium project. Members expressed concern on various aspects including crowd control and traffic arrangements during Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals, air quality and adequacy of fire prevention measures. To address these concerns, the Administration suitably adjusted the proposed design of the new columbarium block and made a re-submission to the then Wong Tai Sin Provisional District Board in July 1997. Members noted the revised proposal.

We consulted the Traffic and Transport Committee of the Wong Tai Sin District Council in March and November 2005 on the proposed traffic management. The Committee raised no objection to the proposed works. We consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on this project in January 2006. The proposal was approved by the Finance Committee on 24 March 2006, and the construction works has also been completed.

Signature

Name in block letters

C H YUE

Post Title

Director of Architectural Services

Date

17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)142

Question Serial No.

Head: 703 – Buildings

Subhead : 3007NB Reprovisioning of
Diamond Hill Crematorium

2793

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question : Regarding the reprovisioning of Diamond Hill Crematorium:

- (a) Please provide a concrete description of the project. Are there currently any other projects of obnoxious nature in the district (for example, waste treatment project)? Please provide a breakdown of on-going and planned projects of obnoxious nature in the district by titles and expenses involved.
- (b) Has the Administration studied the impacts of these projects on air quality and surrounding communities in the district? If yes, please provide a breakdown of every study or research conducted by dates, objectives and conclusions.
- (c) Has the Administration consulted local residents on the projects? If yes, please specify the dates, targets and approaches of these consultation exercises, as well as residents' views. If the Administration has not adopted their views, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. HO Chun-yan, Albert

- Reply :
- (a) The scope of 3007NB is made up of the demolition of the old Diamond Hill Crematorium and construction of a new crematorium to house six new cremators, four service halls and other associated facilities at approved project estimate of \$231.4 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices. The project has just been completed. In the district, another project of similar nature which has been completed recently is the construction of an eight-storey columbarium block (3003NB) on the same site. The approved project estimate of this project is \$113.6 million in MOD prices.
 - (b) Project 3007NB is a designated project under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Ordinance (Cap. 499) and an environmental permit is required for the construction and operation of the new crematorium. We commenced the EIA study process for the project in 1999. The study concluded that the environmental impact arising from the project could be controlled within the criteria under the EIA Ordinance and the Technical Memorandum on EIA process. Having considered the views received during the public inspection stage of the EIA process, the finalized EIA study was endorsed by the Advisory Council on the Environment and approved by the Director of Environmental Protection in March 2004.

- (c) The Administration consulted the Environmental Committee of the former Wong Tai Sin Provisional District Board in November 1997 on a proposal to construct 12 new cremators at the Diamond Hill Crematorium. The Committee only supported the replacement of the six existing cremators due to concerns about possible air emissions. In the light of comments received, the Administration revised the scope of the project to replace only six cremators, and with ones which are of improved design and efficiency.

Requests were received in January and March 2003 respectively from parents of students studying in the schools near the Crematorium and Wong Tai Sin District Council to expedite the project. We consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the project on 19 March 2004. The project was approved by the Finance Committee on 11 June 2004 and the construction works has also been completed.

Signature

Name in block letters

C H YUE

Post Title

Director of Architectural Services

Date

17 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)143

Question Serial No.

Head: 703 – Buildings

Subhead : 3013NB Reprovisioning of
Wo Hop Shek Crematorium

2794

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question : Regarding the reprovisioning of Wo Hop Shek Crematorium:

- (a) Please provide a concrete description of the project. Are there currently any other projects of obnoxious nature in the district (for example, waste treatment project)? Please provide a breakdown of on-going and planned projects of obnoxious nature in the district by titles and expenses involved.
- (b) Has the Administration studied the impacts of these projects on air quality and surrounding communities in the district? If yes, please provide a breakdown of every study or research conducted by dates, objectives and conclusions.
- (c) Has the Administration consulted local residents on the projects? If yes, please specify the dates, targets and approaches of these consultation exercises, as well as residents' views. If the Administration has not adopted their views, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. HO Chun-yan, Albert

- Reply :
- (a) The scope of 3013NB comprises the demolition of the existing crematorium and the construction of a new crematorium providing for six new cremators, three service halls and other ancillary facilities at an approved project estimate of \$686.3 million in money-of-the-day prices. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is also planning to build new public columbarium facilities providing for about 37 000 niches and a Garden of Remembrance at the Wo Hop Shek Cemetery for completion by around 2012. Details of the project are being worked out.
 - (b) Project 3013NB is a designated project under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Ordinance (Cap. 499). An environmental permit is required for the construction and operation of the project. We commenced the EIA study in July 2005 and concluded that the environmental impact arising from the project could be controlled within the criteria under the EIA Ordinance and the Technical Memorandum on the EIA process. The report was published for public inspection in May 2008. The Director of Environmental Protection Department approved the EIA report for the project in June 2008 after the statutory public inspection process.

- (c) The Administration consulted the District Minor Works and Environmental Improvement Committee of the North District Council (NDC) on the details of the project at the meeting on 17 March 2008. Members generally supported the replacement of the existing four cremators and related facilities in Wo Hop Shek Crematorium. Individual members and some local resident organizations were not supportive of the provision of additional cremators due to concerns over possible adverse impact on air quality. To address their concerns, a technical briefing session for members of NDC was conducted on 29 April 2008 to explain the findings of the EIA. They were assured that air emissions from the new cremators would be kept under close monitoring to ensure that they meet the stringent and most up-to-date requirements as approved. The Administration has also undertaken to provide the local community with information on air emissions when the reprovisioned crematorium comes into operation. We consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the project on 11 November 2008. The proposal was approved by the Finance Committee on 13 February 2009.

As regards the proposed columbarium and garden of remembrance project, the local community was consulted through the same meeting at the District Minor Works and Environmental Improvement Committee of the North District Council mentioned above. The project was supported by the relevant committee.

Signature

Name in block letters

C H YUE

Post Title

Director of Architectural Services

Date

18 March 2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)144

Question Serial No.

1196

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

The estimate for Mandatory Provident Fund contribution for 2009-10 (\$8.137 million) increases by 83% as compared with the revised estimate for 2008-09 (\$4.451 million), far higher than the increase of 5.2% in Salaries under Personal Emoluments over the same period. Please explain why there is such a huge increase in the Provident Fund contribution during the following period:

	2007-08 (Actual) (\$ '000)	2009-10 (Estimate) (\$ '000)	Increase
Personal Emoluments - Salaries	2,139,634	2,365,852	+10.6%
Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	2,822	8,137	+1.9 times
Civil Service Provident Fund contribution	1,200	3,666	+2.1 times

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Mo-po, Paul

Reply :

Officers appointed to the civil service on or after 1.6.2000 are not on pensionable terms and are subject to the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme Ordinance. The significant increase in the estimated Mandatory Provident Fund expenditure in 2009 – 10 is due to an increase in the number of civil servants recruited in 2008-09

and that planned for recruitment in 2009-10, and the increase in the estimated expenditure in Civil Service Provident Fund is due to the increase in the number of civil servants on probation/agreement terms who will change to new permanent terms in 2009-10.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

FHB(FE)145

Question Serial No.

2588

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

- (a) Is the net increase of 3 permanent posts in 2009-10 related to (i) following up the outcome of the review of market policy, or (ii) following up the outcome of the review of hawker licence policy? If not, to which areas of work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is it related in 2009-10?
- (b) What measures are in place to address the market management problems (e.g. stall subletting to make profits) as mentioned in Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 51 and the related report of the Public Accounts Committee? Have resources been earmarked in 2009-10 for implementing such measures? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Mo-po, Paul

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The 3 permanent posts created in 2009-10 are Health Inspector Grade staff. They are created for performing food safety regulatory duties.

- (b) The key measures to address the market management problems as mentioned in Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 51 and the related report of the Public Accounts Committee are set out as follows –
- (i) We will conduct utilization and patron opinion surveys on public markets by batches in 2009-10 at an estimated expenditure of \$8 million. The surveys are intended to collect patronage information on individual markets, as well as tenants' and customers' views on possible market improvement measures. The surveys will commence in March 2009. We will present their findings to the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene in mid-2009;
 - (ii) We will introduce service trades (e.g. beauty care/massage, real estate services, Chinese medicine and bone-setting) in selected public markets; and expand the variety of permitted trades, for example traditional snack shops or bakeries with a view to further enhancing the vibrancy of public markets. The estimated expenditure on publicity is estimated at \$200,000;
 - (iii) We will review the provision of cooked food markets in the second half of 2009. The expenditure involved will be included in the surveys as set out in (i) above;
 - (iv) We are reviewing the mechanisms for market rental adjustment, recovery of air-conditioning charges and rates in consultation with the relevant bureaux/departments;
 - (v) We are actively following up on suspected subletting cases and will review and improve the monitoring and investigation procedures for subletting cases;
 - (vi) We will consult the relevant District Council on the future of Market A as mentioned in the Director of Audit's report and follow up as appropriate;
 - (vii) We have revised the planning standards and guidelines for the provision of public markets and have drawn up internal guidelines for conducting viability studies for new public markets; and
 - (viii) We plan to organise workshops/seminars in the second half of 2009 inviting District Councils, Area Committees and other stakeholders to discuss measures to improve public market operation and explore design concepts of new public markets. The resources required can only be determined after detailed arrangements are worked out.

Measures (iv) to (vii) are implemented by existing staff and do not incur additional expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ W H CHEUK _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 17.3.2009 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

Reply Serial No.

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

FHB(FE)146

Question Serial No.

2646

Head: 49 Foods and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2009-10, it is stated that the Department will identify markets with consistently high vacancy rate and deficits for closure, and consider further extending the scheme on contracting out market management to other districts. Are there changes in manpower (i.e. government employees including contract staff) and expenditure involved in these two targets reflected in the Estimates? If yes, what are the actual figures?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Kwok-hung

Reply :

We will employ 76 temporary staff to conduct utilization and patron opinion surveys on public markets by batches in 2009-10 at an estimated expenditure of \$8 million. The surveys will, among others, assist in identifying markets that may be considered for closure, namely those with consistently low patronage and high vacancy rates and deficits.

Regarding the outsourcing of market management work, in 2009-10 we will contract out the management of eight markets in total in Tai Po District and Islands District in July and October respectively. After contracting out these eight markets, there will be a total of 65 public markets managed by contractors in the private sector. We are not able to provide details on the expenditure involved as the tender exercise has yet to commence and the tender price is not known. A total of 17 in-house staff will be affected and be gainfully redeployed within the Department.

Signature _____

Name in block letters W H CHEUK

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 17.3.2009