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Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 17 May 2011**

**Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Poultry Eggs Regulation
under the Food Safety Ordinance**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the proposed introduction of regulation over the imported game, meat, poultry and poultry eggs.

Background

2. Food incidents related to poultry eggs and aquatic products in the past years have revealed inadequacies in the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) in the control of food safety. The Chief Executive announced in his 2007-2008 Policy Address the Government's plan to introduce a Food Safety Bill to strengthen legislative control on food safety. The Bill would provide for food safety control measures including -

- (a) a registration scheme for food importers and food distributors;
- (b) a requirement for food traders to maintain proper transaction records to enhance food traceability;
- (c) power to make regulations for tightening import control on specific food types based on risk assessment; and
- (d) power for the authorities to make orders to prohibit the import and supply of problem food and order the recall of such food.

3. At the meeting of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on 9 February 2010, the Administration briefed members on the detailed proposals of the Bill. To expand the import control to cover food with a high potential health risk, the Administration proposed that import requirements should be set out in the regulations under the Bill. In this regard, the Bill would empower the Secretary for Food and Health ("SFH") to make regulations on the import control of specific food types. Following the enactment of the Bill, the Administration would introduce two sets of regulations, namely (a) Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Poultry Eggs Regulation and (b) Imported Aquatic Products Regulation.

Enactment of the Bill

4. A Bills Committee was formed at the House Committee meeting on 4 June 2010 to study the Bill, which was introduced into the Legislative Council ("LegCo") on 2 June 2010. The Second Reading debate on the Bill was resumed at the Council meeting of 30 March 2011. The Bill, with amendments, was passed at the aforesaid meeting. The Food Safety Ordinance (Commencement) Notice was gazetted on 15 April 2011 and provides for the commencement of the Ordinance (except Part 3 and Division 1 of Part 2). Part 3 and Division 1 of Part 2, i.e. the record-keeping requirement and the registration scheme for food importers and distributors, will come into operation on 1 February 2012.

Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Poultry Eggs Regulation

5. The import of game, meat and poultry is currently regulated under the Imported Game, Meat and Poultry Regulation (Cap. 132AK) and the Import and Export (General) Regulations (Cap. 60A). All consignments of frozen or chilled meat or poultry imported into Hong Kong must be accompanied with an official health certificate which certifies that the meat and poultry concerned is fit for human consumption, and an import licence issued by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.

6. The Administration will make a new regulation under the Ordinance, modelling on the existing provisions in Cap.132AK, to provide for import control for game, meat and poultry. The Administration will also take the opportunity to extend the import control to cover poultry eggs by making corresponding amendment to repeal Cap.132AK.

Relevant papers

7. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
11 May 2011

Relevant papers on the Food Safety Bill

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene	11.12.2007 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes CB(2)516/07-08(01) CB(2)516/07-08(02)
	9.2.2010 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes CB(2)884/09-10(03) CB(2)884/09-10(04)
Legislative Council	30.3.2011	CB(2)1313/10-11 Official Record of Proceedings Pages 99 – 133 (Resumption of the Second Reading debate on and the Third Reading of the Food Safety Bill)

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