



Agriculture sector in Hong Kong

Figure 1 – Local production of vegetables, 2000 to 2016

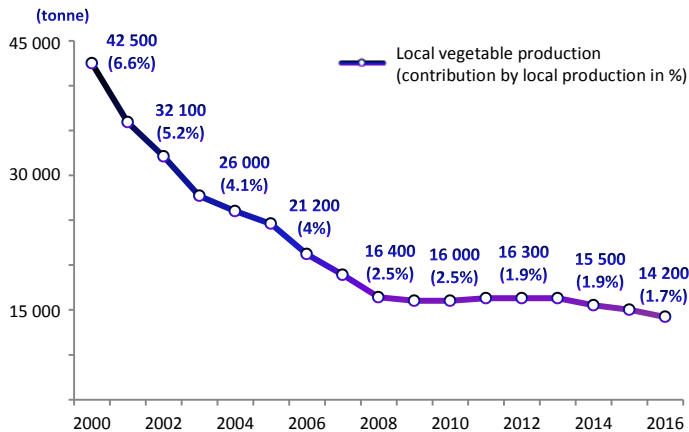


Figure 2 – Local production of live pigs and live poultry, 2007 to 2016

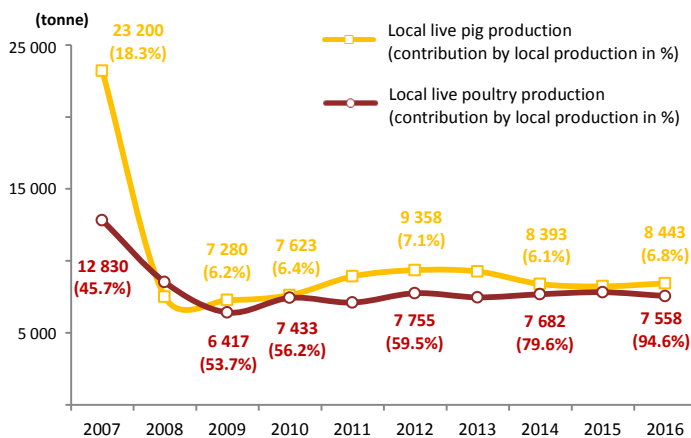
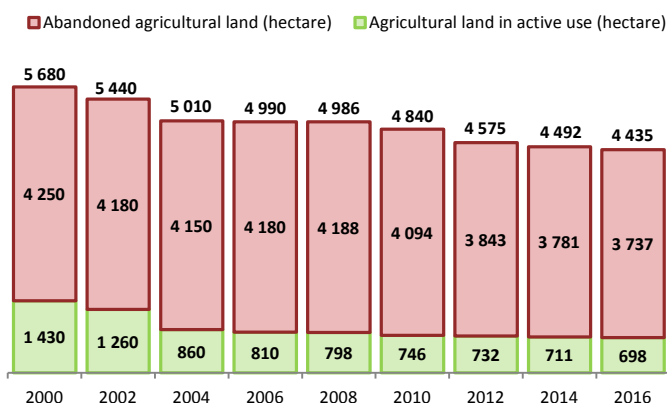


Figure 3 – Area of abandoned and active agricultural land, 2000 to 2016



Highlights

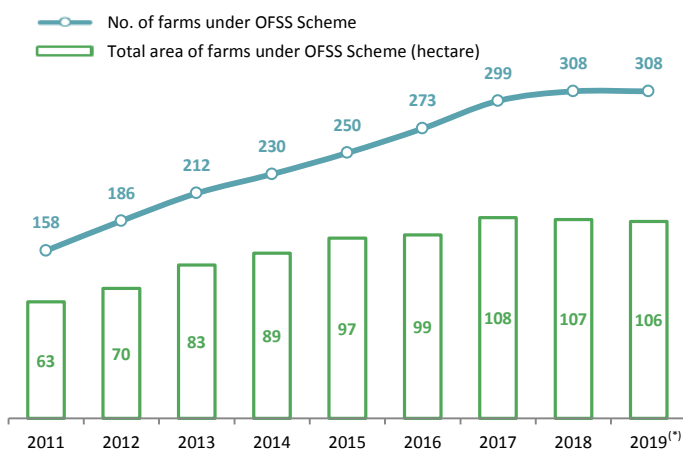
- In Hong Kong, the agriculture sector produces fresh vegetables, pigs and poultry for local consumption. In 2017, the agriculture sector supplied some HK\$966 million worth of produces, and accounted for less than 0.1% of Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product. Despite its small scale, the sector contributes to the local economy by providing alternative sources of fresh and quality food supply.
- Agricultural activities in Hong Kong are mainly conducted in the rural New Territories and urban fringes. At present, there are some 2 400 farms employing 4 300 farmers and workers in Hong Kong. In recent years, there has been a protracted decrease in local production of vegetables, due mainly to an increase in imported produces and shrinkage in active farmland. Between 2000 and 2016, local production of vegetables fell by 66.6%, from 42 500 tonnes to 14 200 tonnes (**Figure 1**). Reflecting this trend, the share of local production of vegetables fell from 6.6% to 1.7% over the same period.
- At present, a livestock keeping licence is required for persons raising livestock such as pig and poultry. In response to public hygiene concerns, the Government has since 2005 launched the voluntary surrender scheme to encourage livestock farms to cease their operations, resulting in a significant drop in live pigs and poultry production between 2007 and 2009. Since then, local production of livestock has leveled off to 8 443 tonnes of live pigs and 7 558 tonnes of live poultry in 2016 (**Figure 2**). In recent years, due to strengthened avian influenza prevention control, supply of live chicken from the Mainland fell sharply and as a result, the share of local live poultry production rose drastically to 94.6% in 2016. With reduced supply of live chicken, the local populace has shifted towards consuming more chilled chicken.
- As at 2016, there were a total of 4 435 hectares of agricultural land in Hong Kong (**Figure 3**). According to the Government, the bulk of such land (around 78% in 2016) is owned privately and a substantial amount of abandoned land is being utilized for storage and/or other industrial uses. Over the years, some agricultural land have been converted into commercial/residential use. Consequently, there has been a gradual decline in both active and abandoned agricultural land between 2000 and 2016.

Agriculture sector in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Implementation of the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme, 2013 to 2018

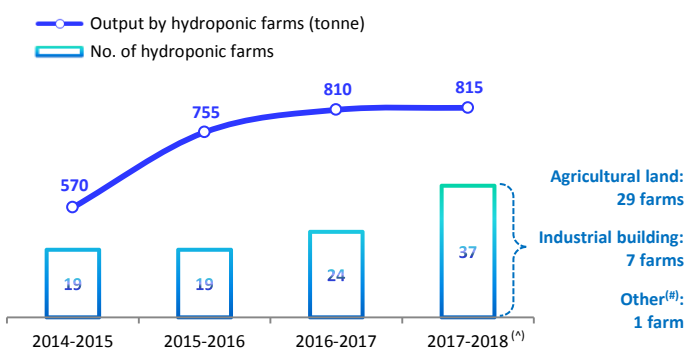
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
No. of new applications	51	44	45	65	58	77
No. of successful cases	14	12	41	29	9	10
- Land area involved (hectare)	6.2	2.6	5.4	4	2.1	1.4
- Average waiting time (year)	4	5	5	4	5.5	3.2
No. of applications on waiting list (cumulative)	258	278	287	300	347	413

Figure 5 – Number and area of farms under the Organic Farming Support Service Scheme, 2011 to 2019



Notes: (*) Information for the year is updated as at end-February 2019.

Figure 6 – Number and output of hydroponic farms



Notes: (#) This refers to the Controlled Environment Hydroponic Research and Development Centre operated by the Vegetable Marketing Organization on a piece of land under short term tenancy.
 (^) Information for the year is updated as at end-February 2018.

Highlights

- In order to facilitate the rehabilitation of fallow farmland, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") introduced the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme ("ALRS") in 2009 to help prospective farmers and landowners willing to rent out their farmland to reach tenancy arrangements. From 2013 to 2018, there were a total of 115 successful cases involving some 22 hectares of agricultural land. Despite the progress, as at 2018, there were a total of 413 applicants on the waiting list who have not yet been matched (Figure 4). In view of the need for further rehabilitation, the Government has recently begun establishing the Agricultural Park, which is an initiative under the 2016 Policy Address and is expected to rejuvenate some 50 hectares of fallow farmland for use by tenant farmers.
- Organic farming is seen as a sustainable practice which may bring added value to local agricultural produces. During the 2000s, AFCD launched the Organic Farming Support Service Scheme ("OFSS Scheme") to provide technical advice and marketing support for registered organic farms. Between 2011 and 2019, the number of farms registered under the OFSS Scheme rose steadily from 158 to 308 (Figure 5). These farms currently occupy around 106 hectares of land and together supply six tonnes of organic vegetables per day.
- In recent years, the Government has also supported the adoption of agro-technology, for instance by facilitating the adoption of hydroponic farming in industrial premises. One of the advantages of hydroponic farms is that they are less land-intensive compared to traditional agriculture. As at end-February 2018, there are 37 hydroponic farms, of which seven are located in industrial buildings (Figure 6). With wider adoption of the technology, the output of vegetables by hydroponic farms increased from 570 tonnes in 2014-2015 to 815 tonnes in 2017-2018.

Data source: Latest figures from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

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 30 April 2019
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