

**For discussion
on 1 February 2005**

LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Population-Based Food Consumption Survey

PURPOSE

This paper is to brief Members on the Population-Based Food Consumption Survey to be conducted by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD).

BACKGROUND

2. The FEHD adopts a food safety control strategy based on the risk analysis model. This is in line with international practices and recommendations of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization. The risk analysis model also provides the basis for effective utilization of resources and priority setting.

3. The risk analysis model is based on the intertwining processes of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication. One well-defined characteristic of risk assessment is the incorporation of a quantitative evaluation of the population's exposure to the hazards through consumption of food. Availability of food consumption pattern of the general public would provide data for both qualitative and quantitative evaluation of risks associated with food.

4. In the past, only small scale studies collecting food consumption data had been conducted. No previous studies had been conducted to collect territory-wide food consumption data for the purpose of food safety risk assessment. The food consumption survey conducted by FEHD in 2000 was only targeted at secondary school students. It is therefore crucial for FEHD to conduct a population-based food consumption survey to establish a comprehensive database for food

safety risk assessment. The survey will also enhance the department's risk assessment capacity.

THE SURVEY

Objectives

5. The objectives of the survey are to –
- (i) obtain information on the up-to-date food consumption pattern (i.e. the types and amounts of food consumed) amongst individuals in Hong Kong;
 - (ii) identify common dishes consumed amongst individuals in Hong Kong; and
 - (iii) develop recipes for the common dishes identified.

Scope

6. The survey will cover the land-based non-institutional population of Hong Kong aged 20 to 84. Residential addresses will be selected randomly from the database maintained by the Census and Statistics Department and one household member in each of the selected household address will be randomly selected for face-to-face interview. The sample will be stratified by age (five-year age range) and gender, and a minimum of 5 200 individuals will be interviewed.

Methodology and Schedule

7. In the survey, food consumption data will be collected through the 2-day 24-hour dietary recalls¹ and food frequency questionnaire². In addition, information about the dietary practice, weight and height, general health, and demographic information of the participants will also be collected.

¹ 24-hour dietary recall is a recall of beverages and foods ingested during the day preceding the interview (the 24 hours from midnight to midnight).

² Food frequency questionnaire is to assess an individual's usual food intake over a period of time by asking about the frequency, and the usual portion sizes of food items or food groups consumed in each eating occasion.

8. Information obtained will be used to develop a recipe database containing information of common dishes consumed by Hong Kong people. Detailed information on the dishes, including the suggested portion size per eating occasion, types and amounts of ingredients used will be included in the database.

9. The survey contract was awarded to the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) last year. CUHK has been working on the development of survey protocol and questionnaires, training of interviewers for the survey and conducting the pilot study. The preparatory work and pilot study will be completed in early 2005. The fieldwork of the survey will start in March 2005 and the whole survey is to be completed by March 2006. The data collected will be analyzed and a written report will be compiled and released by the end of 2006.

WAY FORWARD

10. FEHD will use the data collected to construct a database on the food consumption patterns of Hong Kong people, which will then be used in risk assessment studies on food hazards such as dietary contaminants and food additives. Such information will be valuable for the Government in formulating policies on enhancing food safety and targeting education strategies to promote food safety in Hong Kong

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to note the progress and comment on the way forward of the survey.

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
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