



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局  
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat  
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

本函檔案 Our ref. : CR2/3821/06  
來函檔案 Your ref. : CB2/PL/FE

電話號碼 Tel nos. : 3509 8925  
傳真號碼 Fax nos. : 2136 3281

21 March 2014

Ms Alice LEUNG  
Clerk to the Panel on Food Safety and  
Environmental Hygiene  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Fax: 2509 9055)

Dear Ms Leung,

**LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene  
Food Safety of Poultry Eggs imported from Vietnam in the Local Market**

Thank you for your letter dated 7 March 2014 relaying Hon WONG Kwok-hing's concern over the safety of poultry eggs imported from Vietnam.

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has been closely monitoring information issued by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) on the avian influenza outbreak worldwide. In response to the latest development, appropriate follow-up actions have been taken, including the banning of imports of poultry and poultry products (including poultry eggs) from the infected area to safeguard public health and animal hygiene.

CFS will inform the Consuls-General of the respective countries of its decision to ban imports of poultry eggs from certain countries/regions, and announce this decision to the trade and the public through the media. CFS has been maintaining close liaison with the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) to grasp cases of poultry eggs being imported from the banned countries/regions. Assistance is provided by C&ED to block the import of these poultry eggs and to prevent them from entering the market. If the poultry eggs concerned are found to be on sale in the market, CFS will consider instituting prosecution against the offenders in accordance with the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap.132). Section 54 of the Ordinance

provides that any person selling food unfit for human consumption commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

The import of poultry and poultry products from all provinces of Vietnam has been banned since January 2004 to help prevent avian influenza. The import of poultry eggs (including fresh, whether fertilised or not, salted and preserved eggs) from the country has also been banned since September 2012. In early October 2013, the ban was partially lifted by allowing the import of salted eggs if accompanied by an approved health certificate. However, due to the outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in a number of Vietnamese provinces earlier, CFS has banned the import of salted eggs from Vietnam since 27 February 2014 again.

CFS noted on 3 March 2014 through its regular Food Incident Surveillance System that there had been media reports that fertilised duck eggs (also known as "half-hatched duck eggs") were found under storage and on sale in certain local food retail outlets and food premises. Accordingly, CFS has conducted blitz inspections in the vicinity of the retail outlets concerned. Inspections and reviews of the food acquisition records have also been conducted at related food premises. No sale of the relevant products has been detected. Under the Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612), retailers and food premises are required to keep transaction records of the business from which the food was obtained. Failure to comply with the record-keeping requirement is an offence which may result in a maximum fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment for 3 months upon conviction.

We thank Hon WONG Kwok-hing for his concern over the safety of poultry eggs. CFS will continue to adopt appropriate control measures at import and retail levels and carry out its gate-keeping work properly. Enforcement actions will be taken as necessary so as to prevent poultry eggs originating from countries/regions with import bans from entering the market and to ensure food safety and safeguard public health.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Leung', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Jeff LEUNG)

for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department  
(Attn.: Mr WONG Tun-ming, Donald) (Fax: 2530 1368)