

**For discussion  
on 8 May 2018**

**LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**The Second Hong Kong Population-based Food Consumption Survey  
and Its Relevance to the Food Safety Regulatory Regime**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the Second Hong Kong Population-based Food Consumption Survey (2<sup>nd</sup> FSC) being conducted by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, and its significance to the food safety risk assessment and regulatory work.

**Importance of Food Consumption Data**

2. The CFS adopts a food safety regulatory strategy based on the risk analysis model as recommended by the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. The risk analysis model is based on risk assessment, management, and communication, which are inter-related. Risk analysis model is conducive to a targeted food safety control approach, prioritisation of work and optimal resource utilisation. Many economies adopt this model as their food safety regulatory strategies.

3. Risk assessment involves scientific evaluations of the food safety risk that the population faces due to their exposure to various contaminants through daily food consumption. The risk assessment results provide scientific basis for the CFS to formulate and deploy appropriate risk management measures, and prepare appropriate food safety messages. Food consumption data, i.e. what people are eating and the amount, are essential to these assessments.

4. The CFS completed two food consumption surveys in the past, namely a survey for secondary school students in 2000 and the First Hong

Kong Population-based Food Consumption Survey (1<sup>st</sup> FSC) for approximately 5 000 respondents aged between 20 and 84 for the period from 2005 to 2007. The CFS has made reference to and applied the survey findings in its regulatory work, including daily risk assessments, the First Hong Kong Total Diet Study (1<sup>st</sup> HKTDS)<sup>1</sup>, and various topical risk assessment studies.

## **The Second Hong Kong Population-Based Food Consumption Survey**

### Objective

5. Given that the 1<sup>st</sup> FSC was completed more than a decade ago, and the dietary habits of the population might have changed over time due to socio-economic and cultural factors and trends, we considered it necessary to conduct the 2<sup>nd</sup> FSC to gauge the latest local food consumption habits so as to keep our food safety regulatory regime, strategies, and measures up to date.

### Scope

6. The survey covers 5 000 respondents among the land-based non-institutional population of Hong Kong aged 18 or above. Individual households will be randomly selected, and one member from each selected household will then be randomly selected as respondent. The survey commenced on 13 April 2018 and will last for approximately a year.

### Methodology

7. Dietary information, height and weight measurements, and demographic information will be collected in the survey. Two interviews will be conducted for each respondent. In the first interview, the

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<sup>1</sup> The objective of the 1<sup>st</sup> HKTDS published in 2011 was to estimate dietary exposures of the Hong Kong population and various population subgroups to a range of substances, including contaminants and nutrients, and assess any associated health risks. The study comprised sampling and food preparation, laboratory analysis and dietary exposure estimation. The findings contributed to a comprehensive picture of Hong Kong adult population's exposure to various contaminants and nutrients through food consumption.

interviewer will request the respondent to provide information on foods and drinks consumed in a specific 24-hour period (24-hour diet recall), and information on the consumption of certain foods in the past 12 months (food frequency questionnaire). In the second interview, the respondent is only required to provide information on the 24-hour diet recall.

### Relevant Arrangement

8. All personal data of the respondents will be kept confidential. Neither the CFS nor any other government agencies will have access to the information that can identify the respondents. A range of measures have been adopted to ensure data security in respect of the notebook computers of the interviewers, including the anti-lost sensors with alarm function to avoid accidental loss of the notebook computers.

9. The CFS has commissioned Policy 21 Limited to conduct the survey, and is sending invitation letters by batches to the selected households to explain the objective of the survey and the interview arrangements.

10. Public participation is essential to ensure that the findings can accurately reflect the local dietary habits. The CFS has made a series of publicity efforts, including a press conference, posters and brochures, to urge for the active participation of the selected respondents. Designated CFS webpage and other publicity materials are in place to provide the public with more details.

### **Advice Sought**

11. Members are invited to note the work plan of the 2<sup>nd</sup> FSC.

**Food and Health Bureau  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department  
Centre for Food Safety  
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