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Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 8 May 2018

Hong Kong Population-based Food Consumption Survey

Purpose

This paper provides background information on Hong Kong Population-based Food Consumption Survey ("FCS"), and summarizes discussions of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene ("the Panel") on the subject.

Background

2. According to information available on the website of the Centre for Food Safety ("CFS") of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, population-based FCS is conducted for the purpose of collecting up-to-date food consumption data of the population, including the types and amount of food consumed among individuals. The data collected are used to assess whether the public is exposed to any potential dietary risks (such as pesticides, metallic contaminants and food additives) and also to understand the magnitude of the risk and which population groups may be most at risk. Such information is vital in the Administration's formulation of public policies, risk management measures as well as education strategies for promoting food safety in Hong Kong.
3. CFS conducted the First Population-based FCS between 2005 and 2007. The survey report was subsequently released in April 2010 and published on CFS' website¹.

¹ The survey report (English version only) is accessible at CFS' website http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_firm/files/FCS_final_report.pdf

Panel's discussions

4. At the Panel meeting on 1 February 2005, the Administration briefed members on its plan to conduct the First Population-based FCS. The gist of the Panel's discussions is summarized below.

5. In response to members' enquiries about the objectives and scope of the survey as well as the methodology to be adopted, the Administration advised that the First Population-based FCS aimed to (a) collect up-to-date information on the food consumption patterns and weight measurements among individuals in Hong Kong; (b) identify common dishes consumed by Hong Kong people; and (c) develop recipes for the common dishes identified. The survey would cover the land-based non-institutional population of Hong Kong aged 20 to 84. A minimum of 5 200 eligible individuals would be randomly selected from the database of the Census and Statistics Department for three face-to-face interviews. The three interviews and body weight measurements were conducted by trained interviewers. Interviewers would use two non-consecutive days of 24-hour dietary intake (24-hour recall²) questionnaires and a 110-item food frequency questionnaire³ to obtain food consumption estimates.

6. There was a suggestion that the Administration should consider obtaining also information on the expenditure patterns of Hong Kong people on food consumption. The Administration noted members' suggestion and advised that information obtained would 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 would be included in the database. Other information about the dietary practice, weight and height, general health and demographic information of the participants would also be collected.

7. Responding to an enquiry on the estimated cost for conducting the First Population-based FCS, the Administration advised that it had, through an open tender in late 2003, commissioned the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct the survey. The contract was awarded in March 2004 at a total tender price of \$3.2 million.

² 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).

³ 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.

Latest development

8. According to the press release issued by the Administration on 12 April 2018, given that the dietary pattern of the local population may have changed over time, the Administration considers it necessary to conduct another population-based FCS to gauge the latest food consumption patterns of Hong Kong people, so as to enable CFS to carry out professional and efficient risk assessment and management work. CFS has commissioned Policy 21 Limited to conduct the Second Population-based FCS. The Administration will brief the Panel on the details of the Second Population-based FCS and its relevance to the food safety regulatory regime at the meeting on 8 May 2018.

Relevant papers

9. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
2 May 2018

**Relevant papers on
Hong Kong Population-based Food Consumption Survey**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene	1.2.2005 (Item VI)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>

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