

Government announces ASF testing results

The Government today (September 3) announced the test result of an African Swine Fever (ASF) case. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department tonight confirmed that ASF virus was found in the samples of three pigs from the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse (SSSH).

The concerned batch of pigs from a Mainland registered pig farm for supply to Hong Kong was admitted to the SSSH on September 2. They passed the inspection by veterinary surgeons with no ASF symptoms detected. Until the early morning on September 3, three of the pigs were found dead prior to slaughtering. Veterinary surgeons then inspected the pig carcasses and collected samples for testing of ASF virus.

The spokesman said that after the first ASF case occurred in Hong Kong, the Government, taking into account the views of local and overseas experts and with the support of live pig trade, started imposing a daily clearance arrangement which means all live pigs will be slaughtered within 24 hours upon admittance into SSSH. Under the new arrangement, lairages in different areas of the slaughterhouse will be cleared out and undergo thorough cleansing and disinfection every day. Since the period of stay for pigs in the slaughterhouse is short and the comprehensive daily cleansing and disinfection, together with the enhancement of cleaning and disinfection of vehicles transporting pigs, the risk of ASF spreading in Hong Kong has been largely minimised.

At the second meeting of the standing group of experts on ASF recently organised by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the attending experts had an in-depth discussion on the prevention and control measures against ASF. They regarded that each region should take its own situation into consideration, such as the stocking density, demand and supply of live pigs etc, to formulate effective and practical measures and policies. Given that the local slaughterhouse has already implemented the daily clearance arrangement, the experts considered that the possibilities of infection and spread of the virus to other pigs in Hong Kong has been largely minimised. Therefore, if an ASF case occurs in the local slaughterhouse, the closure of the relevant slaughterhouse and mass culling of other pigs are considered not necessary. Other pigs can be slaughtered as usual and supplied to market for consumption.

The spokesman pointed that with regard to this case, the operation of the slaughterhouse was not affected and the slaughtering process will be carried out as usual. He stressed that ASF will not infect humans and pose food safety risk. All imported and local pigs have to undergo ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections in slaughterhouses to ensure that pigs to be supplied to the market are safe and fit for human consumption. Well-cooked pork is safe for consumption.

The Government has informed the relevant Mainland authorities of the case and supply of live pigs to Hong Kong should not be affected by this test result.

Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool temporarily closed

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (September 3) that Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool in Yuen Long District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.30am tomorrow.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.

Chinese Film Panorama 2019 opens tonight (with photos)

The opening ceremony for the Chinese Film Panorama 2019 was held tonight (September 3) at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, followed by the screening of the opening film "The Composer" (2019), which was directed by Xierzhati Yahefu.

Showcasing 18 movies produced by the Mainland in recent years, the programme is jointly presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the South China Film Industry Workers Union in association with Sil-Metropole Organisation Ltd, Southern Film Co Ltd and the China Film Foundation. The films will be screened until October 13 at venues including the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, the Cinema of the Hong Kong Film Archive, and the lecture halls of the Hong Kong Space Museum and

the Hong Kong Science Museum.

Officiating guests at the opening ceremony included the Deputy Director-General of the Publicity, Culture and Sports Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Mr Li Haitang; Legislative Council member Mr Ma Fung-kwok; the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Ms Michelle Li; the Producer of the opening film "The Composer", Mr Jonathan Shen; the Chairman of the South China Film Industry Workers Union, Mr Yu Luen; the Chairman of Sil-Metropole Organisation Ltd, Mr Chen Yiqi; as well as the representative of the Producer, Ms Song Jie; and the Director, Ms Luo Ying of "Fall in Love with This Land".

The opening film, "The Composer", tells the story of the composer of the "Yellow River Cantata", Xian Xinghai, played by Hu Jun. Xian befriends a local musician while he is trapped in Almaty due to the outbreak of war. Shot in Kazakhstan and Russia, the film exudes an exotic mood. It won Special Jury Award and Best Female Newcomer at the 22nd Shanghai International Film Festival China Movie Channel Media Award.

Other selected films include Wang Xiaoshuai's "So Long, My Son" (2019), Liu Jie's "Baby" (2018), Ning Jingwu's "Yellow Rose" (2019), Dong Yue's "The Looming Storm" (2017), Bai Xue's "The Crossing" (2019), Tian Ye's "When Love Blossoms" (2018), Xin Yukun's "Wrath of Silence" (2017), Huo Meng's "Crossing The Border – Zhaoguan" (2019), Zhang Luan's "Song of Youth" (2019), Zheng Dasheng's "Bangzi Melody" (2017), Lu Yue's "Lost, Found" (2018), Daniel Lee's "The Climbers" (2019), Sonthar Gyal's "Ala Changso" (2018), Adilxah Xahrahman and Zhou Jun's "Fade Away Pastoral" (2018) and Zhao Ziyang's "Old Beast" (2017).

"The Composer" is in Russian and Putonghua, "The Crossing" is in Cantonese and Putonghua, "Bangzi Melody" is in Hebei Jingxing dialect, "Ala Changso" is in Tibetan, "Fade Away Pastoral" is in Uyghur, and the other films are in Putonghua. All films have Chinese and English subtitles.

Tickets priced at \$60 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme details, please call 2734 2900 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/fp/en_US/web/fpo/programmes/cfp2019/index.html.



Prepackaged popcorn product may contain allergen (milk)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (September 3) said that a kind of prepackaged popcorn product manufactured in the United Kingdom might contain an allergen, milk, but it was not declared on the product's food label. Consumers who are allergic to milk are advised not to eat the affected product. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately should they possess it.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Cinema Sweet Popcorn
Brand: The Big Night In
Place of origin: United Kingdom
Producer: Thomas Tucker Ltd
Importer: Chef's Garden Ltd
Net weight: 250 grams per bucket
Best-before date: November 21, 2019

"The CFS, through its Food Incident Surveillance System, noted a notice issued by the Food Standards Agency of the UK that several kinds of popcorn products (including the above-mentioned product) are under recall because they may contain milk but the ingredient is undeclared on the food label. A related notification was also received from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed of the European Commission, indicating that the above local importer had imported the above affected batch of product into Hong Kong," a spokesman for the CFS said.

Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately followed up with the importer concerned as well as major local importers and retailers. Preliminary investigation confirmed that the importer concerned had imported the above batch of the affected product which was on sale in its retail outlets and it had already stopped sale and removed from shelves the affected batch of product and initiated a recall after being notified by the supplier. Members of the public may call its hotline at 2501 5811 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

The spokesman advised consumers who are allergic to milk to stop consuming the product concerned. They should seek medical treatment if they feel unwell after consuming it.

"People who are allergic to milk may have immunologic response like vomiting, diarrhoea and rash upon consumption of food containing this allergen. In severe cases, anaphylactic shock may even develop. As for other

members of the public, generally speaking, they would not be subject to such reactions when the food in question is consumed," he said.

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap 132W) require that all prepackaged food for sale in Hong Kong should list out the food ingredients in its list of ingredients. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.

FEHD smashes suspected illegal private columbarium in Tsuen Wan

â€‹The Private Columbaria Affairs Office (PCAO) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) cracked down on a suspected illegal private columbarium in Tsuen Wan this afternoon (September 3).

The operator in this case was suspected of operating a private columbarium at the premises without a licence under the Private Columbaria Ordinance.

The Court issued a search warrant to PCAO officers to authorise them to search the premises. During the operation, PCAO officers seized a number of exhibits and arrested three men. Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Ordinance any person who operates, keeps, manages or in any other way has control of a columbarium otherwise than under a licence commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for three years, or on conviction on indictment to a fine of \$5 million and imprisonment for seven years.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "This department will continue to take stringent enforcement action against illegally operated private columbaria. Members of the public should not buy or rent niches from any unlicensed private columbaria.

"If members of the public detect any activities of illegally operating a private columbarium, they should immediately make a report to the FEHD by calling the hotline 2868 0000."