

## **CFS announces test results of seasonal food surveillance project on lap-mei**

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (November 22) announced the test results of a recently completed seasonal food surveillance project on lap-mei. The test results of around 140 samples collected were satisfactory.

A CFS spokesman said, "Lap-mei is popular in winter and the CFS has therefore collected a variety of lap-mei samples including Chinese pork sausages, Chinese liver sausages, preserved duck meat and preserved pork from different retailers including online retailers for chemical tests and nutrition content analyses."

Chemical tests targeted veterinary drug residues and preservatives usually found in preserved food, as well as other food additives and colouring matters which may be used in the production process. For nutrition content analyses, the contents of energy, carbohydrates, protein, total fat, saturated fatty acids, trans fatty acids, sodium and sugars of the samples were tested to check if they were consistent with their declared values on the nutrition label.

"Members of the public should maintain a balanced diet and avoid excessive consumption of lap-mei in view of its nitrate/nitrite level and potential risk of nitrosamine, as well as relatively higher sodium, sugar and fat contents in some lap-mei. Infants are highly susceptible to nitrite toxicity and should avoid consuming lap-mei, while for young children, the intake of lap-mei should also be restricted.

"Furthermore, the International Agency for Research on Cancer of the World Health Organization has classified processed meat as 'carcinogenic to humans' (Group 1). The public should avoid excessive consumption of processed meat to reduce the risk of developing colorectal cancer," the spokesman said.

The spokesman also called on the trade to comply with the legal requirements, follow good manufacturing practices and use permitted food additives in an appropriate manner. Retailers should source food from reliable suppliers and maintain a good recording system in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance to allow source tracing if needed.

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## **CHP investigates three additional**

## confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, November 22, the CHP was investigating three additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 405 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 404 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases which involved mutant strains. The patients comprise one male and two females, aged 23 to 43. All of them arrived in Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk). Two patients tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport and one tested positive during quarantine at the designated quarantine facility (Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre). The CHP has announced the details of one of the cases (12409) yesterday night (November 21) ([www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202111/21/P2021112100613.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202111/21/P2021112100613.htm)).

A total of 33 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (November 8 to 21) and all of them are imported cases.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

â€‹The spokesman for the CHP stressed, "The global situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and there is a continuous increase in the number of cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility, and there are also reports of breakthrough infections in some vaccinated individuals. The CHP strongly urges members of the public to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong, in particular to specified places with high risk under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)."

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## Site relocation of Faster Payment System on December 19, 2021

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Faster Payment System (FPS) service will be unavailable from 1am to 11am on December 19, 2021 (Sunday) due to the relocation of system site of the Hong Kong Interbank Clearing Limited (HKICL), the operator of the FPS.

After successfully completing the testing on November 14 to address the issues encountered in the system site relocation and upgrade on October 17, the HKICL has decided to proceed with the system site relocation and upgrade on December 19. Based on the successful experience on November 14, the upcoming exercise is likely to take lesser amount of time to complete. Yet, for prudence sake, a comparable service unavailability period is scheduled for the exercise to allow sufficient time to deal with any unforeseeable scenarios. During the planned service unavailability period, all FPS services, including real-time fund transfers and registration of account proxy with the FPS, will not be available.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) has requested banks and stored value facility (SVF) operators to provide advance and timely notifications to their customers. Members of the public may contact individual banks or SVF operators for more details regarding the FPS services that may be affected during the period when system site relocation is carried out. In case of need, members of the public may make advance arrangements for their payment activities.

The HKMA apologises for any inconvenience caused.

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## **Territory-wide operations against noise annoyance caused by noise from shops**

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) attaches great importance to noise annoyance to citizens caused by noise from shops. To improve the noise environment in various districts, in the past three months the EPD has closely monitored the situation of noise nuisance caused by shops at black spots in various districts and carried out a series of enforcement operations, with a view to stepping up efforts to combat these illegal activities. Relevant departments, including the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Hong Kong Police Force, have also participated in the enforcement operations.

A spokesman for the EPD said that, during the operations, staff of the EPD conducted numerous inspections at the targeted shops at black spots in Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long, Tai Po, Sham Shui Po, Wong Tai Sin and North Point. The shops mainly sold fresh meat, frozen meat, fish, fruit, vegetables and telecommunications equipment, and used loudspeakers for street cries or broadcasting promotional recordings at high volume for the purpose of attracting customers' attention to their goods. After assessment, staff of the EPD discovered that 24 shops in a total of 34 cases were suspected to have violated the Noise Control Ordinance. The EPD is instigating prosecution

against these shops. Apart from prosecuting non-compliant companies, the EPD will also prosecute the directors of the companies with repeated offences in accordance with the law, with a view to stiffening penalties and enhancing the deterrent effect.

The spokesman added that the department's enforcement action will continue, with a focus on shops with repeated contraventions. In addition, the EPD will jointly conduct blitz enforcement action with the FEHD and the Police to combat the illegal activities. The spokesman reminded persons responsible for retail shops and peddlers that they should not use street cries or broadcast promotional recordings in public places to attract customers, so as to avoid causing noise annoyance to nearby residents. Upon conviction, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000. As for the operators or directors of shops with repeated contraventions, they will also be liable for the offence once convicted.

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## People collecting consumption vouchers via Octopus can receive last \$1,000 voucher on December 16 at earliest

A Government spokesman today (November 22) reminded people who collected the first consumption voucher via Octopus on August 1 that if they wish to receive the last \$1,000 voucher on December 16, their cumulative total "eligible spending" has to reach \$4,000 by November 30.

According to the consumption voucher disbursement arrangement, for people collecting the vouchers via Octopus, the last \$1,000 voucher will be disbursed on the 16th day of the following month after the target spending of \$4,000 has been achieved within a specified period from the disbursement of the first voucher. The specified period refers to the fourth to seventh month after the first voucher has been disbursed. Taking the people who collected the first voucher on August 1 as an example, if their "eligible spending" reaches \$4,000 by November 30 (i.e. four months after the voucher disbursement), they will receive the last \$1,000 voucher on December 16. This group of people should have their "eligible spending" reaching \$4,000 by February 28, 2022, at the latest (i.e. seven months after the voucher disbursement) in order to receive the last voucher on March 16, 2022.

People may enquire about the cumulative total "eligible spending" of their consumption vouchers through the following methods:

- Octopus mobile app
- Octopus website ([voucher.octopus.com.hk](https://voucher.octopus.com.hk))
- Octopus customer service hotline: 2969 5500

Meanwhile, according to the disbursement timetable, people who collected the first consumption voucher on October 1 will be disbursed with the second voucher on December 1. For those who chose to collect the vouchers via AlipayHK, Tap & Go or WeChat Pay HK, the value of the second voucher is \$3,000. For those who chose to collect the vouchers via Octopus, the value of the second voucher is \$2,000. They will successively receive SMS notifications or push notifications via the app on the disbursement of the second voucher on December 1.

The public may visit the Consumption Voucher Scheme website ([www.consumptionvoucher.gov.hk](http://www.consumptionvoucher.gov.hk)) or call the hotline 18 5000 for enquiries if they have any questions about the Scheme.