

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in US suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (March 12) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Bronx County of the State of New York in the United States (US), the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area, as well as from Westchester County of the State of New York nearby, with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 79 630 tonnes of chilled and frozen poultry meat, and about 19.6 million poultry eggs from the US last year.

"The CFS has contacted the American authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the WOA and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Fraudulent websites and internet banking login screens related to Shanghai Commercial Bank Limited

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Shanghai Commercial Bank Limited relating to fraudulent websites and internet banking login screens, which have been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the websites or login screens concerned, should contact the bank using the contact

information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

Hong Kong Customs detects case involving possession of suspected "space oil drug" by passenger (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (March 11) detected a case involving possession of etomidate, the main ingredient of the "space oil drug", which is under the Dangerous Drug Ordinance, by an incoming passenger at the Lo Wu Control Point. Four suspected "space oil drug" capsules and two vape sticks containing the suspected "space oil drug" were seized.

A 17-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Shenzhen yesterday. During Customs clearance, four suspected "space oil drug" capsules, two vape sticks containing the suspected "space oil drug" and one other vape stick were found on him. The man was subsequently arrested. The arrested person, who claimed to be unemployed, has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs will continue to step up enforcement and combat against trafficking of the "space oil drug".

Under the Dangerous Drug Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour report hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 is 106.4 (same as yesterday's index).

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on March 11 to noon today (March 12), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 247 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan"

(www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 121 929 samples of food imported from Japan (including 80 037 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 28 128 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.