

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, April 30, 2021 is 101 (same as yesterday's index).

CFS announces food safety report for March

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 30) released the findings of its food safety report for last month. The results of about 4 700 food samples tested were satisfactory except for six samples that were announced earlier. The overall satisfactory rate was 99.9 per cent.

A CFS spokesman said about 1 200 food samples were collected for microbiological tests, and about 3 500 samples were taken for chemical and radiation level tests.

The microbiological tests covered pathogens and hygiene indicators; the chemical tests included testing for pesticides, preservatives, metallic contaminants, colouring matters, veterinary drug residues and others; and the radiation level tests included testing of radioactive caesium and iodine from samples collected from imported food of different regions.

The samples comprised about 2 100 samples of vegetables and fruit and their products; about 300 samples of cereals, grains and their products; about 500 samples of meat and poultry and their products; about 500 samples of milk, milk products and frozen confections; about 600 samples of aquatic and related products, and about 700 samples of other food commodities (including beverages, bakery products and snacks).

The six unsatisfactory samples comprised three samples of Chinese dried white cabbage detected with excessive chromium, two raw milk samples detected with coliform bacteria exceeding the legal limit, and a choy sum sample found to contain excessive pesticide residue.

The CFS has taken follow-up action on the unsatisfactory samples including informing the vendors concerned of the test results, instructing them to stop selling the affected food items and tracing the sources of the food items in question.

The spokesman reminded the food trade to ensure that food for sale is fit for human consumption and meets legal requirements. Consumers should

patronise reliable shops when buying food and maintain a balanced diet to minimise food risks.

FEHD to launch anti-rodent operation in designated target areas next Monday

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will launch the first round of an eight-week anti-rodent operation in designated target areas in various districts next Monday (May 3) to sustain the effectiveness of rodent prevention and control work at the district level and raise public awareness of rodent prevention and control.

An FEHD spokesman said, "In view of the fruitful results of the previous anti-rodent operations in designated target areas, the FEHD will continue to conduct two rounds of the operations this year. FEHD staff will enhance street cleaning services and cleaning of public markets and hawker bazaars in the target areas, including sweeping and cleaning of streets and rear lanes, emptying and cleaning of litter containers, and clearance of miscellaneous articles and waste in public markets and hawker bazaars, so as to keep the environment clean."

Each District Environmental Hygiene Office of the FEHD, taking into account factors including rodent infestation rates, the number of rodent complaints received, views of the local community, the number of food premises and "three-nil" buildings, will identify target areas in each district and continue to adopt multi-pronged strategies including improving environmental hygiene and stepping up rodent disinfection and enforcement actions, for carrying out targeted rodent prevent and control work.

"We will also strengthen rodent prevention and control work at problematic spots such as rear lanes, refuse collection points, markets, hawker bazaars, cooked food markets and peripheral areas of construction sites by placing poisonous baits and traps, destroying rat holes and implementing rodent-proofing measures," the spokesman added.

"Furthermore, inspections of food premises will be stepped up. Enforcement actions against food premises causing poor environmental hygiene conditions, scullery and conducting food preparation at rear lanes, and improper handling and disposal of rubbish will be strengthened. We will also adopt a zero-tolerance approach against common public cleanliness offences and take stringent enforcement actions against illegal disposal of refuse and waste."

The FEHD will also strengthen public education and publicity on rodent prevention and control. Apart from the broadcast of TV and radio Announcements in the Public Interest and display of posters on public

transport facilities, the FEHD will collaborate with District Councils and District Offices of the Home Affairs Department to organise anti-rodent promotional activities. The department will also arrange health talks for building management offices of private buildings, persons-in-charge of food premises, and market and hawker stall operators to provide information and technical advice on rodent prevention and control.

The spokesman appealed to the community for active participation in the anti-rodent activities as well as joint efforts to eliminate the three fundamental survival conditions of rodents, namely food, harbourage and passages, i.e. the elimination of the food sources and hiding places of rodents as well as blockage of their dispersal routes, so as to combat the rodent problem.

New arrangements for Home Affairs Department hotlines for persons under home quarantine

The Home Affairs Department (HAD) announced today (April 30) that in view of the recent drop in service demand from persons under compulsory home quarantine, the operational arrangement of the 37 HAD hotlines for persons under home quarantine will be adjusted.

With effect from next Monday (May 3), the 36 district hotlines will cease to operate, while the hotline 2835 1473 will continue to provide support services for persons under home quarantine. The operating hours of the hotline are from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

Contracts awarded for "DHC Express" in 11 districts

The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) announced today (April 30) that the service contracts for the operation of "District Health Centre (DHC) Express" in 11 districts (namely Central and Western District, Wan Chai District, Eastern District, Yau Tsim Mong District, Kowloon City District, Kwun Tong District, North District, Tai Po District, Sai Kung District, Sha Tin District and Islands District) have been awarded to the following non-governmental organisations (NGOs) through an invitation for proposals. A

total sum of \$596 million in non-recurrent expenditure will be involved in the implementation of "DHC Express" in the 11 districts over three years.

Districts	NGOs to operate DHC Express
Central and Western	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation
Wan Chai	Methodist Centre
Eastern	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation
Yau Tsim Mong	The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon
Kowloon City	The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon
Kwun Tong	United Christian Medical Service
North	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association
Tai Po	United Christian Medical Service
Sai Kung	Haven of Hope Christian Service
Sha Tin	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation
Islands	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council

"DHC Express" will provide prevention-focused primary healthcare services on different levels, including health promotion and education, health risk factor assessment and chronic disease management. Apart from serving as a district health resource hub that links different service providers of various aspects of primary healthcare services in the community, "DHC Express" will also leverage on a private healthcare network in the community to enable members of the public to receive the necessary care and services when needed.

Operators of "DHC Express" are required to identify suitable premises for a core centre as their primary service site. "DHC Express" in the various districts is targeted to commence services in the fourth quarter this year.

The Government is funding NGOs to provide focused primary healthcare services in an interim arrangement in the above 11 districts, with a view to laying a foundation for the establishment of a prevention-focused primary healthcare system. The Government is working in parallel to take forward the works projects for the permanent sites of District Health Centres (DHCs) in all districts. Services of "DHC Express" will be migrated as appropriate to the DHCs of the respective districts in due course.