

Government continues to take follow-up actions on virus testing results seriously

The Government is very concerned about the recent suspected abnormality in the testing results of a private laboratory, and is continuing to take follow-up actions on the incident seriously.

The incident involved 30 specimens collected by a private laboratory on April 20. The samples were identified earlier as 29 preliminary positive cases and one "indeterminate" case. The persons concerned were subsequently admitted to hospitals for isolation and subjected to further virus and antibody testing by the Hospital Authority. Some of these persons tested negative during isolation, and they also tested negative for the COVID-19 antibody. These persons have been discharged from the hospitals accordingly. For close contacts who were put into quarantine centres in relation to the incident, they were also released gradually after testing negative, without the need to complete the 14-day quarantine period. The Government extended sincere apologies to the citizens affected.

The Government has requested the private laboratory to conduct an in-depth investigation of the incident and submit an investigation report. The Government will consider an appropriate penalty based on the investigation result and the severity of the incident in accordance with the terms and conditions of the relevant service contract, including suspension of the service contract. The Government also reserves the right of not accepting any bids by the contractor for similar government service contracts in the future. If the medical laboratory and its professional personnel are found to have violated relevant professional codes, the Government will report the case to the Medical Laboratory Technologists Board for follow-up actions.

The Public Health Laboratory Service Branch of the Department of Health noticed an abnormality in the preliminary positive results submitted by the private laboratory when reviewing the concerned specimens on April 22. The Food and Health Bureau and the Department of Health immediately followed up on the incident and arranged for Professor Yuen Kwok-yung, who is a member of the Expert Advisory Panel, and a team from the University of Hong Kong to inspect the concerned laboratory. However, for the sake of prudence, it was necessary to isolate the preliminary positive cases at that time in order to cut off any possible silent transmission chains in the community as soon as possible.

CFS urges public not to consume a kind of imported prepackaged frozen broccoli suspected to be contaminated with toxic plant seeds

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 28) urged the public not to consume a kind of prepackaged frozen broccoli imported from New Zealand due to possible contamination with seeds of *Xanthium* spp, a toxic plant. The trade should stop using or selling the product concerned immediately if they possess it.

Details of the product are as follows:

Product name: Organic Broccoli Florets

Brand: OOB Food LP

Place of origin: New Zealand

Importer: The Produce Company Hong Kong Limited

Net weight: 370 grams per pack

Best-before date: September 3, 2022, and September 23, 2022

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS received a notification from the New Zealand concerned authorities through the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) that the abovementioned product might have been contaminated with seeds of *Xanthium* spp, a toxic plant, and is being recalled. According to the information provided by INFOSAN, the affected product has been imported into Hong Kong. Upon learning of the incident, the CFS immediately contacted the local importer concerned for follow-up."

A preliminary investigation found that the importer, The Produce Company Hong Kong Limited, had imported some of the affected product into Hong Kong. For the sake of prudence, the CFS has instructed the importer to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of product and initiate a recall. Enquiries about the recall can be made to the importer's hotline at 2587 1187 during office hours.

"Seeds of *Xanthium* spp contain toxic substances which can induce liver and kidney damage," the spokesman said.

The spokesman urged consumers not to consume the affected product if they have bought any. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately if they possess it.

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

Government welcomes passage of Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Tax Concessions for Carried Interest) Bill 2021

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, welcomed the passage of the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (Tax Concessions for Carried Interest) Bill 2021 (the Bill) by the Legislative Council today (April 28).

The Bill seeks to amend the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112) to provide tax concessions for carried interest distributed by eligible private equity funds operating in Hong Kong.

Mr Hui said, "The tax concession regime for carried interest would attract more private equity funds to operate and be managed in Hong Kong, thus boosting more investment management and related activities, which will bring business opportunities to various professional services and economic benefits to Hong Kong."

Qualifying carried interest recipients have to fulfil substantial activities requirements (including the number of qualified full-time employees and operating expenditure incurred in Hong Kong) for the tax concessions to apply. The Bill also expands the classes of assets that may be held and administered by a special purpose entity on behalf of a fund for the purpose of profits tax exemption regime for funds, with a view to facilitating the operation of funds in Hong Kong.

The Bill will commence on the day on which the amendment ordinance is gazetted, and will apply concessionary tax treatment to eligible carried interest received by, or accrued to, qualifying carried interest recipients on or after April 1, 2020. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority and Inland Revenue Department will announce relevant implementation details in due course.

Government welcomes passage of tax concessions

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, welcomed the passage of the Revenue (Tax Concessions) Bill 2021 by the

Legislative Council today (April 28). It gives effect to the tax concessions proposed by the Government in the 2021-22 Budget, reducing salaries tax, tax under personal assessment and profits tax for the year of assessment 2020/21 by 100 per cent, subject to a ceiling of \$10,000 per case.

"The concessionary measure helps relieve the financial burden of taxpayers. The Inland Revenue Department will reflect the tax reductions in the tax demand notes to be issued," Mr Hui said.

The measure will benefit 1.87 million taxpayers of salaries tax and tax under personal assessment, and 128 000 businesses. The government revenue in 2021-22 will be reduced by \$12.45 billion accordingly.

[Tenders invited for tenancy of government property](#)

The Government Property Agency is inviting tenders for a three-year tenancy of Shop No. 3 in the Restricted Area on the Departure Level of China Hong Kong City, China Ferry Terminal, 33 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

The premises should only be used for general retail purposes (excluding storage and sale, display or distribution of duty-free goods, perfume and cosmetics).

The tender notice was uploaded today (April 28) to the Agency's website: www.gpa.gov.hk. Tender documents are available for collection at the Government Property Agency, 9/F, South Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, during the period from 9am to 6pm from Mondays to Fridays, except public holidays. The documents can also be downloaded from the Agency's website.

Interested tenderers who wish to attend a site inspection should make a prior appointment with the Government Property Agency by calling 3842 6777 on or before May 11 this year.

Tenderers must submit their tenders by placing them in the Government Logistics Department Tender Box situated on the Ground Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong, before noon on May 20 this year. Late tenders will not be accepted.