

Applications for Shell Fish (Hairy Crab) Permit to start today

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has prepared a new type of shell fish permit which will be open for application by operators selling hairy crabs from today (July 16).

A spokesman for the FEHD said today, "Under the Food Business Regulation, save with the written permission of the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH), no person shall sell any restricted foods, including shell fish. The FEHD has prepared the Shell Fish (Hairy Crab) Permit for application by the trade with a view to enhancing the regulation of the sale and storage of hairy crabs to safeguard food safety."

The permit requires that premises selling hairy crabs must comply with the relevant hygiene requirements, including the provision of a refrigerator and a hand-washing basin, and hairy crabs for sale must be obtained from lawful sources accompanied with health certificates acceptable to the DFEH and must be kept in a refrigerator.

For the online sale of hairy crabs, operators shall obtain a permit for selling restricted food online. For selling hairy crabs at other food premises such as fresh provision shops and fish stalls in public markets, prior written permission from the FEHD shall be obtained.

The spokesman said, "Starting from September 3, 2018, operators selling hairy crabs should have obtained the Shell Fish (Hairy Crab) Permit or written permission granted by the FEHD."

In addition, under the Food Safety Ordinance, any person who carries on a hairy crab importation or distribution business shall register with the FEHD and has to maintain a record of the movements of the hairy crabs. Retailers are also required to keep records of the business from which the hairy crabs are obtained so as to facilitate the tracing of the source and distribution of the hairy crabs.

Application forms for the Shell Fish (Hairy Crab) Permit can be downloaded from the FEHD website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/forms/permit.html) or obtained from the FEHD's District Environmental Hygiene Offices. Applicants can complete and submit the electronic application form online or return the completed application form to the District Environmental Hygiene Offices.

The spokesman urged the trade to source hairy crabs from reliable suppliers and comply with the relevant regulatory requirements. Under the Food Business Regulation, any person who operates an unlicensed food business or sells restricted foods without permission is liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

He also reminded consumers to buy hairy crabs from reliable shops or market stalls which have been granted with the relevant food business licence/permit/written permission from the FEHD.

For enquiries, please call the FEHD hotline at 2868 0000.