

Government's response to media enquiries

In response to media enquiries about an individual planning to make a submission to the Central People's Government (CPG) to request releasing certain military sites for housing development, a Government spokesperson responded today (July 12) as follows:

The status and nature of military sites are different from other land in Hong Kong. According to the stipulations in the Basic Law and the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Garrisoning of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the use and management of military sites are matters of national defence for which CPG has sole responsibility, and are not matters of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

All existing military sites are used for defence purposes with none left idle. The HKSAR Government has no plan to seek any change to the use of these sites.

Military sites are matters concerning national defence and the CPG. They are not an option for increasing land supply.

Pesticide residues exceed legal limits in mango sample

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 12) announced that a mango sample was found to contain pesticide residues at levels exceeding the legal limits. The CFS is following up on the case.

A CFS spokesman said, "The CFS collected the mango sample from an online shop for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained esfenvalerate and fenvalerate both at a level of 0.35 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the maximum residue limits (MRLs) of the two pesticides (both at the level of 0.2 ppm).

"Based on the levels of pesticide residues detected in the sample, adverse health effects will not be caused under usual consumption," he added.

Generally speaking, rinsing fruit thoroughly under running water can reduce the level of pesticide residues. To further reduce the intake of pesticide residues, the fruit can be peeled.

Any person who imports, manufactures or sells any food not in compliance with the requirements of the Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap 132CM) concerning pesticide residues commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

Since the regulation came into effect on August 1, 2014, the CFS has taken over 148 500 samples at import, wholesale and retail levels for testing for pesticide residues. Together with the unsatisfactory sample announced today, a total of 227 food samples (including 219 vegetable and fruit samples) have been detected as having excessive pesticide residues. The overall unsatisfactory rate is less than 0.2 per cent.

The spokesman added that excessive pesticide residues in food may arise from the trade not observing Good Agricultural Practice, e.g. using excessive pesticides and/or not allowing sufficient time for pesticides to decompose before harvesting. The MRLs of pesticide residues in food set in the Regulation are not safety indicators. They are the maximum concentrations of pesticide residues to be permitted in a food commodity under Good Agricultural Practice when applying pesticides. In this connection, consumption of food with pesticide residues higher than the MRLs will not necessarily lead to any adverse health effects.

The CFS will follow up on the unsatisfactory results, including tracing the source of the food in question and taking samples for testing. Investigation is ongoing.

Temporary traffic arrangements for trial run of tram track renewal works in Western district from next Wednesday

The Transport Department (TD) today (July 12) reminded the public that to facilitate a trial run of the tram track renewal works at Des Voeux Road West, parts of the traffic lanes of Des Voeux Road West and Connaught Road West will be temporarily closed from about 9am next Wednesday (July 18) to 6pm next Friday (July 20).

Appropriate traffic signs and road markings will be erected on-site to guide motorists.

The TD anticipates that the traffic in the vicinity of the above road sections will be relatively busy. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience in case of traffic congestion. Members of the public are advised to stay alert to the latest traffic news through the media or the department's

website (www.td.gov.hk).

LegCo subcommittee special meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways will hold a special meeting at 10am tomorrow (July 13) in Conference Room 1 of the LegCo Complex to discuss the issues relating to the alleged substandard steel works at Hung Hom Station under the Shatin to Central Link project.

Sample of rice vermicelli with roast duck detected with excessive Bacillus cereus

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 12) announced that a sample of rice vermicelli with roast duck was found to contain an excessive amount of *Bacillus cereus*, a pathogen. The CFS is following up on the case.

"Following up on a food complaint, the CFS collected the above sample from a restaurant in Causeway Bay for testing. The test result showed that the sample contained *Bacillus cereus* at a level of 230 000 per gram. Under the Microbiological Guidelines for Food, if ready-to-eat food contains *Bacillus cereus* at a level of more than 100 000 per gram, it is considered unsatisfactory," a CFS spokesman said.

The spokesman said that the CFS had informed the restaurant concerned of the unsatisfactory test result and instructed it to suspend the sale of the affected food. The CFS has also provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff of the restaurant, and requested it to review and improve the food production process and carry out thorough cleaning and disinfection.

According to Section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132), all food available for sale in Hong Kong, locally produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

Bacillus cereus is commonly found in the environment. Unhygienic conditions in food processing and storage may give rise to its growth. Consuming food contaminated with excessive Bacillus cereus may cause gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting and diarrhoea.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health.