

Centre for Food Safety launches new online services

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (May 31) launched a number of new services to expand the functions of the Food Trader Portal (FTP), allowing traders to apply for import permission for eggs; report the arrival of food consignments of eggs, meat, poultry and game as well as consignments of other food types imported by air; and handle matters concerning the release of the consignments online.

A CFS spokesperson said, "The CFS has been rolling out different online services at the FTP in phases since December 2019. Together with the new services launched today, the service scope of the FTP at present covers trader registration and renewal, applications for all import licenses and import permissions issued by the CFS, and handling of the arrival reporting and release of consignments of eggs, meat, poultry, game, milk and frozen confections and consignments imported by air containing other food types."

In tandem with the roll-out of the new online services, the CFS has implemented a series of enhancement measures, including rearranging the format of the import permission and its application form to clearly set out the name of the issuing entity of the country/place of origin and types of the eggs to be imported, along with detailed import conditions, including the documents required and contact information of the relevant CFS offices.

The spokesperson said, "If reporting of consignment arrival is required, importers may submit the report online through the FTP. After receiving the report, the FTP will, according to the specific operational flow based on food type and mode of transport, issue instructions or notices to the importers for completion of the consignment release procedures. As most of the food consignment information has been provided through the FTP in advance, the time spent on consignment release at the border food control offices of the CFS can be shortened."

The spokesperson added, "Importers can continue to submit various applications and report arrival of consignments on paper having regard to their operational needs. The CFS has provided a new unified paper form for reporting consignment arrival to the food control offices at sea, land and air borders. For importers who wish to enjoy various kinds of online services at the FTP, they should actively consider opening their user accounts as soon as practicable."

To enable food traders to know more about the operation of the FTP and the above new measures, the CFS held an online briefing on May 3, followed by a number of training workshops to provide hands-on experience in operating the FTP for food traders. Presentation notes, training manuals and frequently asked questions on the new measures were also produced and posted on the website for traders' reference.

For more details, please visit the FTP at www.ftp.cfs.gov.hk.