

CFS continues to crack down on inbound persons illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong (with photos)

A spokesman for the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) announced today (September 16) that in order to combat inbound persons illegally bringing regulated food such as raw meat, poultry and eggs into Hong Kong, the CFS has continuously stepped up interception and mounted enforcement actions, and deployed quarantine detector dogs to assist law enforcement officers in carrying out their duties at various land boundary control points, all in an effort to safeguard public health.

During the CFS's operation over the past week (September 9 to 15), 68 cases concerning inbound persons suspected of illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong were found. All these persons were unable to provide health certificates for the relevant food. Three of the cases were detected by quarantine detector dogs, and upon investigation by law enforcement officers, raw meat was found in the personal baggage of the two inbound persons, one of whom had vacuum-packed raw meat, while raw eggs were found in the personal baggage of the remaining inbound person. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted against the persons involved. The investigations are ongoing.

The CFS will continue to maintain close liaison and exchange of intelligence with other enforcement departments, including Hong Kong Customs, and step up enforcement operations at various boundary control points. As of yesterday, the CFS has instituted over 1 400 prosecutions against inbound persons for illegally bringing regulated food into Hong Kong this year, nearly double the number from the same period last year.

Under the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60), each consignment of imported meat and poultry is required to apply for an import licence from the FEHD. In addition, pursuant to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), each consignment of imported game, meat, poultry and eggs must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the issuing entity of the place of origin and/or import permission of the FEHD. Offenders are liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment.

The CFS reminds members of the public not to defy the law by importing regulated food without a recognised health certificate, written permission from the FEHD or an import licence. In addition, the CFS will continue strengthening publicity and education at various control points and reminding the public through various channels (e.g. websites, posters, leaflets and social media) that they must abide by the relevant Hong Kong laws when purchasing food across the boundary.

