

## FEHD arrests unlicensed hawkers for illegal sale of food such as meat

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (November 12) said that the department recently conducted a series of blitz operations across the territory targeting hawkers selling food from unknown sources or expired food. Together with some similar enforcement actions carried out in Kwai Chung earlier, a total of 13 persons have been prosecuted to date.

The FEHD spokesman said that food items, including sushi, bread, canned food, bottled soybean milk, packaged milk and meat, were seized during the latest operations conducted in the Eastern, Kwun Tong and Kowloon City Districts. The FEHD will charge the unlicensed hawkers concerned with illegal hawking, causing obstruction in public places, selling restricted food without permission, or selling expired food.

In general, FEHD staff will deal with elderly or disabled hawkers in a more lenient manner. However, the FEHD spokesman stressed that if the sale of food from unknown sources or expired food is involved, due to food safety considerations, FEHD staff will take stringent enforcement actions, including immediate arrests without prior warning. Enforcement actions by the FEHD will continue. No one should defy the law.

The spokesman reminded members of the public that consuming food from unknown sources and expired food, particularly high-risk food such as meat, sashimi and sushi, may pose serious food safety risks. Members of the public should refrain from patronising illegal hawkers when purchasing any food. The public may report hawkers selling suspicious food to the department. Immediate follow-up actions will be taken.

According to the relevant ordinances, unlicensed hawking is subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and six months' imprisonment. If unlicensed hawking activities also cause obstruction of passageways, offenders may be fined \$25,000 or imprisoned for three months. In addition, any person who sells restricted food (including frozen meat, sashimi and sushi) without permission or sells expired food commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.