

FEHD demands that school lunch box supplier ensure food safety

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) convened a meeting with the meal box supplier, Luncheon Star, again today (February 21) on the food quality issues of its lunch boxes and its follow-up work. A preliminary written report submitted by the supplier was also received.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "We attach great importance to the incident, and has been actively following up since early last week. From the meeting today and the preliminary written report submitted by the supplier, we noted that the supplier has increased manpower in response to the manpower shortage earlier and has implemented a series of measures to ensure food quality."

He said, "The FEHD staff inspected the food factories again yesterday and today, with no irregularities found during the inspections. In the coming days, we will arrange inspections to the food factories concerned every day to ensure that the relevant licensing conditions are observed and the hygienic standards stipulated in the laws are met. We will also check whether the supplier has duly implemented the improvement measures mentioned in the written report."

The spokesman reiterated that the supplier must fulfill its responsibility to ensure food quality. The department will seriously handle any violation of the relevant requirements.

The FEHD has so far received two suspected food poisoning outbreaks referred by the Centre for Health Protection, involving a total of four students who consumed the lunch boxes provided by the supplier on February 13 and 16 respectively. The department announced yesterday that the test results of the 11 food samples and 25 environmental swabs samples collected from the food factories concerned during the investigations last week were all satisfactory.

Apart from the above-mentioned follow-up work on the quality of meal boxes of Luncheon Star, the FEHD also continues inspections to some 200 local licensed food factories endorsed to supply school lunch boxes, to remind operators of the proper way of handling school lunch boxes. The inspections will be completed within this week. Moreover, the department will organise an online talk to remind meal box suppliers that they should follow good hygienic practices during food preparation and develop a food safety plan based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system.